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TRAITS AND STORIES

OF

THE IRISH PEASANTRY

VOLUME FOUR

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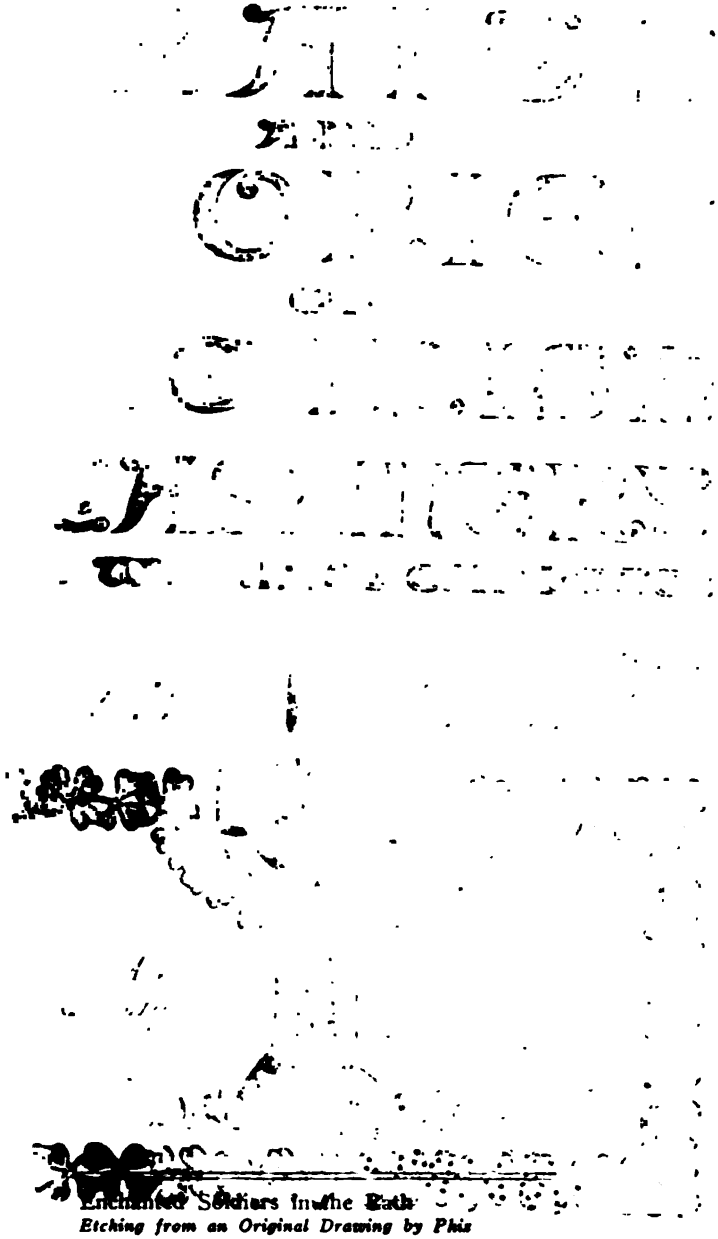

Enchanted Soldiers in the Bath
Etching from an Original Drawing by Phis

Enchanted Soldiers in the Rath

Letting from an original Drawing by Pais

TRAITS AND STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY

BY WILLIAM CARLETON

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No. 573

Printed by
THE COLONIAL PRESS
C. H. Simonds & Co., Boston, U. S. A.

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Enchanted Soldiers in the Rath
Etching from an Original Drawing by Pais

TRAITS AND STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY

BY WILLIAM CARLETON

IRELAND
TRAITS AND STORIES

PHELIM O'TOOLE'S COURTSHIP

Phelim O'Toole, who had the honour of being that interesting personage, an only son, was heir to a snug estate of half an acre, which had been the family patrimony since the time of his grandfather, Tyrrell O'Toole, who won it from the *Sassenah* at the point of his reaping-hook, during a descent once made upon England by a body of "spalpeens," in the month of August. This resolute little band was led on by Tyrrell, who, having secured about eight guineas by the excursion, returned to his own country, with a coarse linen travelling-bag slung across his shoulder, a new hat in one hand, and a staff in the other. On reaching once more his native village of Teernarogarah, he immediately took half an acre, for which he paid a moderate rent in the shape of daily labour as a cotter. On this he resided until death, after which event, he was succeeded by his son, Larry O'Toole, the father of the "purty boy" who is about to shine in the following pages.

Phelim's father and mother had been married near seven years without the happiness of a fam-

ily. This to both was a great affliction. Sheelah O'Toole was melancholy from night to morning, and Larry was melancholy from morning to night. Their cottage was silent and solitary; the floor and furniture had not the appearance of any cottage in which Irish children are wont to amuse themselves. When they rose in the morning, a miserable stillness prevailed around them; young voices were not heard—laughing eyes turned not on their parents—the melody of angry squabbles, as the urchins, in their parents' fancy, cuffed and scratched each other—half, or wholly naked among the ashes in the morning, soothed not the yearning hearts of Larry and his wife. No, no; there was none of this. Morning passed in a quietness hard to be borne: noon arrived, but the dismal, dreary sense of childishness hung upon the house and their hearts; night again returned, only to add its darkness to that which overshadowed the sorrowful spirits of this disconsolate couple.

For the first two or three years, they bore this privation with a strong confidence that it would not last. The heart, however, sometimes becomes tired of hoping, or unable to bear the burthen of expectation, which time only renders heavier. They first began to fret and pine, then to murmur, and finally to recriminate.

Sheelah wished for children, "to have the crathurs to spake to," she said, "and comfort us when we'd get ould an' helpless."

Larry cared not, provided they had a son to inherit the "half acre." This was the burthen

of his wishes, for in all their altercations, his closing observation usually was—"well, but what's to become of the half acre?"

"What's to become of the half acre? Arrah what do I care for the half acre? It's not that you ought to be thinkin' of, but the dismal poor house we have, wid not the laugh or schreech of a single *pastiah*[1] in it from year's end to year's end."

"Well, Sheelah?"

"Well, yourself, Larry? To the *diouol* I pitch your half acre, man."

"To the *diouol* you pitch—What do you fly at me for?"

"Who's flyin' at you? They'd have little tow on their rock that 'ud fly at *you.*"

"You are flyin' at me; an' only you have a hard face, you wouldn't do it."

"A hard face! Indeed it's well come over wid us, to be tould that by the likes o' you! ha!"

"No matther for that! You had betther keep a soft tongue in your head, an' a civil one, in the mane time. Why did the divil timpt you to take a fancy to me at all?"

"That's it. Throw the *grah* an' love I *once* had for you, in my teeth now. It's a manly thing for you to do, an' you may be proud of it. Dear knows, it would be betther for me I had fell in consate wid any face but yours."

"I wish to goodness you had! I wouldn't be as I am to-day. There's that half acre—"

"To the *diouol,* I say, I pitch yourself an' your half acre! Why do you be comin' acrass

me wid your half acre? Eh?—Why do you?"

"Come now; don't be puttin' your hands agin your sides, an waggin your impty head at me, like a rockin' stone."

"An' why do you be aggravatin' at me wid your half acre?"

"Bekase I have a good right to do it. What'll become of it when I'd—"

"——That for you an' it, you poor excuse!"

"When I di——"

"——That for you an' it, I say! That for you an' it, you atomy!"

"What'll become of my half acre when I die? Did you hear *that?*"

"You ought to think of what'll become of yourself, when you die; that's what you ought to think of; but little it throubles you, you sinful reprobate! Sure the neighbours despises you."

"That's a falsity; but they know the life I lade wid *you*. The edge of your tongue's well known. They pity me, for bein' joined to the likes of you. Your bad tongue's all you're good for."

"Aren't you afeard to be flyin' in the face o' Providence the way you are? An' to be ladin' me sich a heart-scalded life for no rason?"

"It's your own story you're tellin'. Sure I haven't a day's pace wid you, or ever had these three years. But wait till next harvest, an' if I'm spared, I'll go to England. Whin I do, I've a consate in my head, that you'll never see my face agin."

"Oh, you know that's an ould story wid you. Many a time you threatened us wid that afore.

Who knows but you'd be dhrowned on your way, an' thin we'd get another husband."

"An' be these blessed tongs, I'll do it afore I'm much ouldher!"

"An' lave me here to starve an' sthruggle by myself! Desart me like a villain, to poverty an' hardship! Marciful Mother of Heaven, look down upon me this day! but I'm the ill-thrated, an' ill-used poor crathur, by a man that I don't, an' never did, desarve it from! An' all in regard that that 'half acre' must go to strangers! Och! oh!"

"Ay! now take to the cryin', do; rock yourself over the ashes, an' wipe your eyes wid the corner of your apron; but, I say agin, *what's to become of the half acre?*"

"Oh, God forgive you, Larry! That's the worst I say to you, you poor half-dead blaguard!"

"Why do you massacray me wid your tongue as you do?"

"Go an—go an. I won't make you an answer, you atomy! That's what I'll do. The heavens above turn your heart this day, and give me strinth to bear my throubles an' heart-burnin', sweet Queen o' Consolation! Or take me into the arms of Parodies, sooner nor be as I am, wid a poor baste of a villain, that I never turn my tongue on, barrin' to tell him the kind of a man he is, the blaguard!"

"You're betther than you desarve to be!"

To this, Sheelah made no further reply; on the contrary, she sat smoking her pipe with a

significant silence, that was only broken by an occasional groan, an ejaculation, or a singularly devout upturning of the eyes to heaven, accompanied by a shake of the head, at once condemnatory and philosophical; indicative of her dissent from what he said, as well as of her patience in bearing it.

Larry, however, usually proceeded to combat all her gestures by *viva voce* argument; for every shake of her head he had an appropriate answer: but without being able to move her from the obstinate silence she maintained. Having thus the field to himself, and feeling rather annoyed by the want of an antagonist, he argued on in the same form of dispute, whilst she, after first calming her own spirit by the composing effects of the pipe, usually cut him short with——

"Here, take a blast o' this, maybe it'll settle you."

This was received in silence. The good man smoked on, and every puff appeared as an evaporation of his anger. In due time he was as placid as herself, drew his breath in a grave composed manner, laid his pipe quietly on the hob, and went about his business as if nothing had occurred between them.

These bickerings were strictly private, with the exception of some disclosures made to Sheelah's mother and sisters. Even these were thrown out rather as insinuations that all was not right, than as direct assertions that they lived unhappily. Before strangers they were perfect turtles.

Larry, according to the notices of his life furnished by Sheelah, was "as good a husband as ever broke the world's bread;" and Sheelah "was as good a poor man's wife as ever threw a gown over her shoulders." Notwithstanding all this caution, their little quarrels took wind; their unhappiness became known. Larry, in consequence of a failing he had, was the cause of this. He happened to be one of those men who can conceal nothing when in a state of intoxication. Whenever he indulged in liquor too freely, the veil which discretion had drawn over their recriminations was put aside, and a dolorous history of their weaknesses, doubts, hopes, and wishes, most unscrupulously given to every person on whom the complainant could fasten. When sober, he had no recollection of this, so that many a conversation of cross-purposes took place between him and his neighbours, with reference to the state of his own domestic inquietude, and their want of children.

One day a poor mendicant came in at dinner hour, and stood as if to solicit alms. It is customary in Ireland, when any person of that description appears during meal times, to make him wait until the meal is over, after which he is supplied with the fragments. No sooner had the *boccagh*—as a certain class of beggars is termed—advanced past the jamb, than he was desired to sit until the dinner should be concluded. In the mean time, with the tact of an adept in his calling, he began to ingratiate himself with Larry and his wife; and after sounding the sim-

ple couple upon their private history, he discovered that want of children was the occasion of their unhappiness.

"Well, good people," said the pilgrim, after listening to a dismal story on the subject, "don't be cast down, sure, whether or not. There's a Holy Well that I can direct yez to in the county ——. Any one, wid trust in the Saint that's over it, who'll make a pilgrimage to it on the Patthern day, won't be the worse for it. When you go there," he added, "jist turn to a Lucky Stone that's at the side of the well, say a Rosary before it, and at the end of every dicken (decade) kiss it once, ache of you. Then you're to go round the well nine times, upon your bare knees, sayin' your Pathers an' Aves all the time. When that's over, lave a ribbon or a bit of your dress behind you, or somethin' by way of an offerin', thin go into a tent an' refresh yourselves, an' for that matther, take a dance or two; come home, live happily, an' trust to the holy saint for the rest."

A gleam of newly awakened hope might be discovered lurking in the eyes of this simple pair, who felt those natural yearnings of heart incident to such as are without offspring.

They looked forward with deep anxiety to the anniversary of the Patron Saint; and when it arrived, none certainly who attended it, felt a more absorbing interest in the success of the pilgrimage than they did.

The days on which these pilgrimages are performed at such places are called Pattern or Pa-

tron days. The journey to holy wells or holy lakes is termed a Pilgrimage, or more commonly a Station. It is sometimes enjoined by the priest, as an act of penance; and sometimes undertaken voluntarily, as a devotional work of great merit in the sight of God. The crowds in many places amount to from five hundred to a thousand, and often to two, three, four, or five thousand people.

These Stations have, for the most part, been placed in situations remarkable for wild and savage grandeur, or for soft, exquisite, and generally solitary beauty. They may be found on the high and rugged mountain top; or sunk in the bottom of some still and lonely glen, far removed from the ceaseless din of the world. Immediately beside them, or close in their vicinity, stand the ruins of probably a picturesque old abbey, or perhaps a modern chapel. The appearance of these gray, ivy-covered walls is strongly calculated to stir up in the minds of the people the memory of by-gone times, when their religion, with its imposing solemnities, was the religion of the land. It is for this reason, probably, that patrons are countenanced; for if there be not a political object in keeping them up, it is beyond human ingenuity to conceive how either religion or morals can be improved by debauchery, drunkenness and bloodshed.

Let the reader, in order to understand the situation of the place we are describing, imagine to himself a stupendous cliff overhanging a green glen, into which tumbles a silver stream down a height of two or three hundred feet. At the bot-

tom of this rock, a few yards from the basin formed by the cascade, in a sunless nook, was a well of cool, delicious water. This was the "Holy Well," out of which issued a slender stream, that joined the rivulet formed by the cascade. On the shrubs which grew out of the crag-cliffs around it, might be seen innumerable rags bleached by the weather out of their original colour, small wooden crosses, locks of human hair, buttons, and other substitutes for property; poverty allowing the people to offer it only by fictitious emblems. Lower down in the glen, on the river's bank, was a smooth green, admirably adapted for the dance, which, notwithstanding the religious rites, is the heart and soul of a Patron.

On that morning a vast influx of persons, male and female, old and young, married and single, crowded eagerly towards the well. Among them might be noticed the blind, the lame, the paralytic, and such as were afflicted with various other diseases; nor were those good men and their wives who had no offspring to be omitted. The mendicant, the pilgrim, the boccagh, together with every other description of impostors, remarkable for attending such places, were the first on the ground, all busy in their respective vocations. The highways, the fields, and the *boreens,* or bridle-roads, were filled with living streams of people pressing forward to this great scene of fun and religion. The devotees could in general be distinguished

from the country folks by their Pharisaical and penitential visages, as well as by their not wearing shoes; for the Stations to such places were formerly made with bare feet: most persons now, however, content themselves with stripping off their shoes and stockings on coming within the precincts of the holy ground. Human beings are not the only description of animals that perform pilgrimages to holy wells and blessed lakes. Cows, horses, and sheep are made to go through their duties, either by way of prevention, or cure, of the diseases incident to them. This is not to be wondered at, when it is known that in their religion every domestic animal has its patron saint, to whom its owner may at any time pray on its behalf.

When the crowd was collected, nothing in the shape of an assembly could surpass it in the originality of its appearance. In the glen were constructed a number of tents, where whisky and refreshments might be had in abundance. Every tent had a fiddler or a piper; many two of them. From the top of a pole that ran up from the roof of each tent, was suspended the symbol by which the owner of it was known by his friends and acquaintances. Here swung a salt herring or a turf; there a shillelah; in a third place a shoe, in a fourth place a wisp of hay, in a fifth an old hat, and so on with the rest.

The tents stood at a short distance from the scene of devotion at the well, but not so far

as to prevent the spectator from both seeing and hearing what went on in each. Around the well, on bare knees, moved a body of people, thickly wedged together, some praying, some screaming, some excoriating their neighbours' shins, and others dragging them out of their way by the hair of the head. Exclamations of pain from the sick or lame, thumping oaths in Irish, recriminations in broken English, and prayers in bog Latin, all rose at once to the ears of the patron saint, who, we are inclined to think—could he have heard or seen his worshippers—would have disclaimed them altogether.

"For the sake of the Holy Virgin, keep your sharp elbows out o' my ribs."

"My blessin' an you, young man, an' don't be lanin' an me, i' you plase!"

"*Damnho sherry orth, a rogarah ruah!*[2] what do you mane? Is it my back you're brakin'?"

"Hell purshue you, you ould sinner, can't you keep the *spike* of your crutch out o' my *stomach!* If you love me tell me so; but, by the livin' farmer, I'll take no such hints as *that!*"

"*I'm* a pilgrim, an' don't brake my leg upon the rock, an' my blessin' an you!"

"Oh, murdher sheery! my poor child 'ill be smodhered!"

"My heart's curse an you! is it the ould cripple you're thrampin' over?"

"Here, Barny, blood alive, give this purty young girl a lift, your sowl, or she'll soon be undhermost!"

"'Och, 'twas on a Christmas mornin'
That Jeroosillim was born in
The Holy Land'——

Oh, my neck's broke!—the curse——Oh! I'm kilt fairly, so I am! The curse o' Cromwell an you, an' hould away—

'The Holy Land adornin'
All by the Baltic Say.
Three angels on a Station,
All in deep meditation,
Wor takin' raycrayation,
All by the'——

contints o' the book if you don't hould away, I say agin, an' let me go an wid my *rann,* it'll be worse for you!—

'Wor takin' raycrayation,
All by the Baltic Say!!'"

"Help the ould woman there."

"Queen o' Patriots pray for us!—St. Abraham——go to the divil, you bosthoon; is it crushin' my sore leg you are?—St. Abraham pray for us! St. Isinglass, pray for us! St. Jonathan,——musha, I wisht you wor in America, honest man, instid o' twistin' my arm like a *gad?*—St. Jonathan, pray for us. Holy Nineveh, look down upon us wid compression an' resolution this day. Blessed Jerooslim, throw down compuncture an' meditation upon us Chrystyeens assembled here afore you to offer up our sins! Oh, grant us, blessed Catasthrophy, the holy virtues of Timptation an' Soli-

tude, through the improvement an' accommodation of St. Kolumbkill! To him I offer up this button, a bit o' the waistband o' my own breeches, an' a taste of my wife's petticoat, in reminbrance of us havin' made this holy Station; an' may they rise up in glory to prove it for us at the last day! Amin!"

Such was the character of the prayers and ejaculations which issued from the lips of the motley group that scrambled, and crushed, and screamed, on their knees around the well. In the midst of this ignorance and absurdity, there were visible, however, many instances of piety, goodness of heart, and simplicity of character. From such you could hear neither oath nor exclamation. They complied with the usages of the place modestly and attentively; though not insensible, at the same time, to the strong disgust which the general conduct of those who were both superstitious and wicked was calculated to excite. A little from the well, just where its waters mingled with those of the cascade, men and women might be seen washing the blood off their knees, and dipping such parts of their body as were afflicted with local complaints into the stream. This part of the ceremony was anything but agreeable to the eye. Most of those who went round the well drank its waters; and several of them filled flasks and bottles with it, which they brought home for the benefit of such members of the family as could not attend in person.

this went forward at the well, scenes
nt kind were enacted lower down
ents. No sooner had the penitents
ult rites of the Station over, than
ff to the whisky; and decidedly,
nding of their bare knees upon the
fter the pushing, crushing, and ex-
odily strength which they had been
dergo—we say, that the comforts
ents to be had in the tents were
ble. Here the dancing, shouting,
rting, drinking, and fighting,
vild uproar of noise, that was per-
ding. The leading boys and the
s of the parish were all present,
he rustic revelry. Tipsy men were
every direction; fiddles were play-
re squeaking, men were rushing in
ies to some fight, women were
heads of such as had been beaten,
were collecting their friends for a
Here you might see a grove of
and hear the crash of the onset;
r place, the heads of the dancing
g up and down in brisk motion
owd that surrounded them. The
g now gone through his Station,
in by a circle of those who wanted
his beads or his scapulars. The
had his own mob, from among
ce might be heard rising in its
o the praise of—

"Brave O'Connell, the Liberathur,
An' great Salvathur of Ireland's Isle!"

As evening approached, the whisky brought out the senseless prejudices of parties and factions in a manner quite consonant to the habits of the people. Those who, in deciding their private quarrels, had in the early part of the day beat and abused each other, now united as the subordinate branches of a greater party, for the purpose of opposing in one general body some other hostile faction. These fights are usually commenced by a challenge from one party to another, in which a person from the opposite side is simply, and often very good-humouredly, invited to assert, that "black is the white of his enemy's eye;" or to touch the old coat which he is pleased to trail after him between the two opposing powers. This characteristic challenge is soon accepted; the knocking down and yelling are heard; stones fly, and every available weapon is pressed into the service on both sides. In this manner the battle proceeds, until, probably, a life or two is lost. Bones, too, are savagely broken, and blood copiously spilled, by men who scarcely know the remote cause of the enmity between the parties.

Such is a hasty sketch of the Pattern, as it is called in Ireland, at which Larry and Sheelah duly performed their station. We, for our parts, should be sorry to see the innocent pastimes of a people abolished; but, surely, customs which perpetuate scenes of profligacy and crime

should not be suffered to stain the pure and holy character of religion.

It is scarcely necessary to inform our readers that Larry O'Toole and Sheelah complied with every rite of the Station. To kiss the "Lucky Stone," however, was their principal duty. Larry gave it a particularly honest smack, and Sheelah impressed it with all the ardour of a devotee. Having refreshed themselves in the tent, they returned home, and, in somewhat less than a year from that period, found themselves the happy parents of an heir to the half-acre, no less a personage than young Phelim, who was called after St. Phelim, the *patron* of the "*Lucky Stone.*"

The reader perceives that Phelim was born under particularly auspicious influence. His face was the herald of affection everywhere. From the moment of his birth, Larry and Sheelah were seldom known to have a dispute. Their whole future life was, with few exceptions, one unchanging honeymoon. Had Phelim been deficient in comeliness, it would have mattered not a *crona baun.* Phelim, on the contrary, promised to be a beauty; both his parents thought it, felt it, asserted it; and who had a better right to be acquainted, as Larry said, "wid the outs an' ins, the ups an' downs of his face, the darlin' swaddy!"

For the first ten years of his life Phelim could not be said to owe the tailor much; nor could the covering which he wore be, without

more antiquarian lore than we can give to it, exactly classed under any particular term by which the various parts of human dress are known. He himself, like some of our great poets, was externally well acquainted with the elements. The sun and he were particularly intimate; wind and rain were his brothers, and frost also distantly related to him. With mud he was hand and glove, and not a bog in the parish, or a quagmire in the neighbourhood, but sprung up under Phelim's tread, and threw him forward with the brisk vibration of an old acquaintance. Touching his dress, however, in the early part of his life, if he was clothed with nothing else, he was clothed with mystery. Some assert that a cast-off pair of his father's nether garments might be seen upon him each Sunday, the wrong side foremost, in accommodation with some economy of his mother's, who thought it safest, in consequence of his habits, to join them in this inverted way to a cape which he wore on his shoulders. We ourselves have seen one, who saw another, who saw Phelim in a pair of stockings which covered him from his knee-pans to his haunches, where, in the absence of waistbands, they made a pause—a breach existing from that to the small of his back. The person who saw all this affirmed, at the same time, that there was a dearth of cloth about the skirts of the integument which stood him instead of a coat. He bore no bad resemblance, he said, to a moulting fowl, with scanty

feathers, running before a gale in the farm yard.

Phelim's want of dress in his merely boyish years being, in a great measure, the national costume of some hundred thousand young Hibernians in his rank of life, deserves a still more particular notice. His infancy we pass over; but from the period at which he did *not* enter into small clothes, he might be seen every Sunday morning, or on some important festival, issuing from his father's mansion, with a piece of old cloth tied about him from the middle to the knees, leaving a pair of legs visible, that were mottled over with characters which would, if found on an Egyptian pillar, put an antiquary to the necessity of constructing a new alphabet to decipher them. This, or the inverted breeches, with his father's flannel waistcoat, or an old coat that swept the ground at least two feet behind him, constituted his state dress. On week days he threw off this finery, and contented himself, if the season were summer, with appearing in a dun-coloured shirt, which resembled a noun-substantive, for it could stand alone. The absence of soap and water is sometimes used as a substitute for milling linen among the lower Irish; and so effectually had Phelim's single change been milled in this manner, that, when disenshirting at night, he usually laid it standing at his bedside where it reminded one of frosted linen in everything but whiteness.

This, with but little variation, was Phelim's

dress until his tenth year. Long before that, however, he evinced those powers of attraction which constituted so remarkable a feature in his character. He won all hearts; the chickens and ducks were devotedly attached to him; the cow, which the family always *intended* to buy, was in the habit of licking Phelim in his dreams; the two goats which they actually did buy, treated him like one of themselves. Among the first and last he spent a great deal of his early life; for as the floor of his father's house was but a continuation of the dunghill, or the dunghill a continuation of the floor, we know not rightly which, he had a larger scope, and a more unsavoury pool than usual, for amusement. Their dunghill, indeed, was the finest of its size and kind to be seen; quite a tasteful thing, and so convenient, that he could lay himself down at the hearth, and roll out to its foot, after which he ascended it on his legs, with all the elasticity of a young poet triumphantly climbing Parnassus.

One of the greatest wants which Phelim experienced in his young days, was the want of a capacious pocket. We insinuate nothing; because with respect to his agility in climbing fruit-trees, it was only a species of exercise to which he was addicted—the eating and carrying away of the fruit being merely incidental, or, probably, the result of abstraction, which, as every one knows, proves what is termed "the Absence of Genius." In these ambitious exploits, however, there is no denying that he bit-

terly regretted the want of a pocket; and in connection with this we have only to add, that most of his solitary walks were taken about orchards and gardens, the contents of which he has been often seen to contemplate with deep interest. This, to be sure, might proceed from a provident regard to health, for it is a well-known fact that he has frequently returned home in the evenings, distended like a Boa Constrictor after a gorge; yet no person was ever able to come at the cause of his inflation. There were, to be sure, suspicions abroad, and it was mostly found that depredations in some neighbouring orchard or garden had been committed a little before the periods in which it was supposed the distention took place. We mention these things after the example of those "d——d good-natured" biographers who write great men's lives of late, only for the purpose of showing that there could be no truth in such suspicions. Phelim, we assure an enlightened public, was voraciously fond of fruit; he was frequently inflated, too, after the manner of those who indulge therein to excess; fruit was always missed immediately after the periods of his distention, so that it was impossible *he* could have been concerned in the depredations then made upon the neighbouring orchards. In addition to this, we would beg modestly to add, that the pomonian temperament is incompatible with the other qualities for which he was famous. His parents were too ignorant of those little eccentricities which, had they known them, would have opened up a cor-

rect view of the splendid materials for village greatness which he possessed, and which, probably, were nipped in their bud for the want of a pocket to his breeches, or rather by the want of a breeches to his pocket; for such was the wayward energy of his disposition, that he ultimately succeeded in getting the latter, though it certainly often failed him to procure the breeches. In fact, it was a misfortune to him that he was the son of his father and mother at all. Had he been a second Melchizedec, and got into breeches in time, the virtues which circumstances suppressed in his heart might have flourished like cauliflowers, though the world would have lost all the advantages arising from the splendour of his talents at going naked.

Another fact, in justice to his character, must not be omitted. His *penchant* for fruit was generally known; but few persons, at the period we are describing, were at all aware that a love of whisky lurked as a predominant trait in his character, to be brought out at a future era in his life.

Before Phelim reached his tenth year, he and his parents had commenced hostilities. Many were their efforts to subdue some peculiarities of his temper which then began to appear. Phelim, however, being an only son, possessed high vantage ground. Along with other small matters which he was in the habit of picking up, might be reckoned a readiness at swearing. Several other things also made their appearance in his parents' cottage, for whose presence there, ex-

cept through his instrumentality, they found it rather difficult to account. Spades, shovels, rakes, tubs, frying-pans, and many other articles of domestic use, were transferred, as if by magic, to Larry's cabin.

As Larry and his wife were both honest, these things were, of course, restored to their owners, the moment they could be ascertained. Still, although this honest couple's integrity was known, there were many significant looks turned upon Phelim, and many spirited prophecies uttered with especial reference to him, all of which hinted at the probability of his dying something in the shape of a perpendicular death. This habit, then, of adding to their furniture, was one cause of the hostility between him and his parents; we say one, for there were at least a good round dozen besides. His touch, for instance, was fatal to crockery; he stripped his father's Sunday clothes of their buttons, with great secrecy and skill; he was a dead shot at the panes of his neighbours' windows; a perfect necromancer at sucking eggs through pin-holes; took great delight in calling home the neighbouring farmers' workmen to dinner an hour before it was ready; and was in fact a perfect master in many other ingenious manifestations of character, ere he reached his twelfth year.

Now, it was about this period that the small-pox made its appearance in the village. Indescribable was the dismay of Phelim's parents, lest he among others might become a victim to it. Vaccination had not then surmounted the

prejudices with which every discovery beneficial to mankind is at first met; and the people were left principally to the imposture of quacks, or the cunning of certain persons called "fairy men" or "sonsie women." Nothing remained now but that this formidable disease should be met by all the power and resources of superstition. The first thing the mother did was to get a gospel consecrated by the priest, for the purpose of guarding Phelim against evil. What is termed a Gospel, and worn as a kind of charm about the person, is simply a slip of paper, on which are written by the priest the few first verses of the Gospel of St. John. This, however, being worn for no specific purpose, was incapable of satisfying the honest woman. Superstition had its own peculiar remedy for the small-pox, and Sheelah was resolved to apply it. Accordingly she borrowed a neighbour's ass, drove it home with Phelim, however, on its back, took the interesting youth by the nape of the neck, and, in the name of the Trinity, shoved him three times under it, and three times over it. She then put a bit of bread into its mouth, until the ass had mumbled it a little, after which she gave the savoury morsel to Phelim, as a *bonne bouche*. This was one preventive against the small-pox; but another was to be tried.

She next clipped off the extremities of Phelim's elf locks, tied them in linen that was never bleached, and hung them beside the Gospel about his neck. This was her second cure; but

there was still a third to be applied. She got the largest onion possible, which, having cut into nine parts, she hung from the roof tree of the cabin, having first put the separated parts together. It is supposed that this has the power of drawing infection of any kind to itself. It is permitted to remain untouched, until the disease has passed from the neighbourhood, when it is buried as far down in the earth as a single man can dig. This was a third cure; but there was still a fourth. She borrowed ten asses' halters from her neighbours, who, on hearing that they were for Phelim's use, felt particular pleasure in obliging her. Having procured these, she pointed them one by one at Phelim's neck, until the number nine was completed. The tenth she put on him, and with the end of it in her hand, led him like an ass, nine mornings, before sunrise, to a south-running stream, which he was obliged to cross. On doing this, two conditions were to be fulfilled on the part of Phelim; he was bound, in the first place, to keep his mouth filled, during the ceremony, with a certain fluid which must be nameless: in the next, to be silent from the moment he left home until his return.

Sheelah having satisfied herself that everything calculated to save her darling from the small-pox was done, felt considerably relieved, and hoped that whoever might be infected, Phelim would escape. On the morning when the last journey to the river had been completed, she despatched him home with the halters. Phelim,

however, wended his way to a little hazel copse, below the house, where he deliberately twined the halters together, and erected a swing-swang, with which he amused himself till hunger brought him to his dinner.

"Phelim, you idle thief, what kep you away till now?"

"Oh, mudher, mudher, gi' me a piece o' *arran?* (bread.)"

"Why, here's the praties done for your dinner. What kep you?"

"Oh, be gorra, it's well you ever seen me at all, so it is!"

"Why," said his father, "what happened you?"

"Oh, bedad, a terrible thing all out. As I was crassin' Dunroe Hill, I thramped on *hungry grass.* First, I didn't know what kem over me, I got so wake; an' every step I wint, 'twas waker an' waker I was growin', till at long last, down I dhrops, an' couldn't move hand or fut. I dunna how long I lay there, so I don't; but anyhow, who should be *sthreelin'* acrass the hill, but an ould *baccagh.*

"'My *bouchaleen dhas,'* says he—'my beautiful boy,' says he—'you're in a bad state I find. You've thramped upon Dunroe *hungry-grass,* an' only for somethin' it's a *prabeen* you'd be, afore ever you'd see home. Can you spake at all?' says he.

"'Oh, murdher,' says I, 'I b'lieve not.'

"'Well here,' says the *baccagh,* 'open your purty *gub,* an' take in a thrifle of this male, an'

you'll soon be stout enough.' Well, to be sure, it bates the world! I had hardly tasted the male, whin I found myself as well as ever; bekase you know, mudher, that's the cure for it. 'Now,' says the *baccagh,* 'this is the spot the fairies planted their hungry grass an, so you'll know it agin when you see it. What's your name?' says he.

"'Phelim O'Toole,' says I.

"'Well,' says he, 'go home an' tell your father an' mother to offer up a prayer to St. Phelim, your namesake, in regard that only for him you'd be a *corp* before any relief would a come near you; or, at any rate, wid the fairies.'"

The father and mother, although with a thousand proofs before them that Phelim, so long as he could at all contrive a lie, would never speak truth, yet were so blind to his well-known propensity, that they always believed the lie to be truth, until they discovered it to be a falsehood. When he related a story, for instance, which carried not only improbability, but impossibility on the face of it, they never questioned his veracity. The neighbours, to be sure, were vexed and nettled at the obstinacy of their credulity; especially on reflecting that they were as sceptical in giving credence to the narrative of any other person, as all rational people ought to be. The manner of training up Phelim, and Phelim's method of governing them, had become a by-word in the village. "Take a sthraw to him, like Sheelah O'Toole," was often ironically said to mothers remarkable for mischievous indulgence to their children.

The following day proved that no charm could protect Phelim from the small-pox. Every symptom of that disease became quite evident; and the grief of his doating parents amounted to distraction. Neither of them could be declared perfectly sane; they knew not how to proceed—what regimen to adopt for him, nor what remedies to use. A week elapsed, but each succeeding day found him in a more dangerous state. At length, by the advice of some of the neighbours, an old crone, called "Sonsy Mary," was called in to administer relief through the medium of certain powers which were thought to be derived from something holy and also supernatural. She brought a mysterious bottle, of which he was to take every third spoonful, three times a day; it was to be administered by the hand of a young girl of virgin innocence, who was also to breathe three times down his throat, holding his nostrils closed with her fingers. The father and mother were to repeat a certain number of prayers; to promise against swearing, and to kiss the hearth-stone nine times—the one turned north, and the other south. All these ceremonies were performed with care, but Phelim's malady appeared to set them at defiance; and the old crone would have lost her character in consequence, were it not that Larry, on the day of the cure, after having promised not to swear, let fly an oath at a hen, whose cackling disturbed Phelim. This saved her character, and threw Larry and Sheelah into fresh despair.

They had nothing now for it but the "fairy

man," to whom, despite the awful mystery of his character, they resolved to apply rather than see their only son taken from them for ever. Larry proceeded without delay to the wise man's residence, after putting a small phial of holy water in his pocket to protect himself from fairy influence. The house in which this person lived was admirably in accordance with his mysterious character. One gable of it was formed by the mound of a fairy Rath, against which the cabin stood endwise; within a mile there was no other building; the country around it was a sheep-walk, green, and beautifully interspersed with two or three solitary glens, in one of which might be seen a cave that was said to communicate under ground with the rath. A ridge of high-peaked mountains ran above it, whose evening shadow, in consequence of their form, fell down on each side of the rath, without obscuring its precincts. It lay south; and, such was the power of superstition, that during summer, the district in which it stood was thought to be covered with a light and silence decidedly supernatural. In spring, it was the first to be in verdure, and in autumn, the last. Nay, in winter itself, the rath and the adjoining valleys never ceased to be green. These circumstances were not attributed to the nature of the soil, to its southern situation, nor to the fact of its being pasture land; but simply to the power of the fairies, who were supposed to keep its verdure fresh for their own revels.

When Larry entered the house, which had an air of comfort and snugness beyond the common,

a tall thin pike of a man, about sixty years of age, stood before him. He wore a brown great-coat that fell far short of his knees; his small-clothes were closely fitted to thighs not thicker than hand telescopes; on his legs were drawn gray woollen stockings, rolled up about six inches over his small-clothes; his head was covered by a bay bob-wig, on which was a little round hat, with the edge of the leaf turned up in every direction. His face was short and sallow; his chin peaked; his nose small and turned up. If we add to this, a pair of skeleton-like hands and arms projecting about eight inches beyond the sleeves of his coat; two fiery ferret-eyes; and a long small holly wand, higher than himself, we have the outline of this singular figure.

"God save you, nabour," said Larry.

"Save you, save you, nabour," he replied, without pronouncing the name of the deity.

"This is a thryin' time," said Larry, "to them that has childhre."

The fairy-man fastened his red glittering eyes upon him, with a sinister glance that occasioned Larry to feel rather uncomfortable.

"So you venthured to come to the fairy-man?"

"It is about our son, an' he all we ha——"

"Whisht!" said the man, waving his hand with a commanding air; "Whisht; I wish you wor out o' this, for it's a bad time to be here. Listen! Listen! Do you hear nothing?"

Larry changed colour. "I do," he replied—"the Lord protect me. Is that *them?*"

"What did you hear?" said the man.

"Why," returned the other, "I heard the bushes of the rath all movin', jist as if a blast o' wind came among them!"

"Whisht," said the fairy-man, "they're here; you mustn't open your lips while you're in the house. I know what you want, an' will see your son. Do you hear anything more? If you do, lay your forefinger along your nose; but don't spake."

Larry heard, with astonishment, the music of a pair of bag-pipes. The tune played was one which, according to a popular legend, was first played by Satan; it is called "Go to the Devil and shake yourself." To our own knowledge, the peasantry in certain parts of Ireland refuse to sing it for the above reason. The mystery of the music was heightened too, by the fact of its being played, as Larry thought, behind the gable of the cabin, which stood against the side of the rath, out of which, indeed, it seemed to proceed.

Larry laid his finger along his nose, as he had been desired; and this appearing to satisfy the Fairy-man, he waved his hand to the door, thus intimating that his visitor should depart; which he did immediately, but not without observing that this wild-looking being closed and bolted the door after him.

It is unnecessary to say that he was rather anxious to get off the premises of the good people; he therefore lost little time until he arrived at his own cabin; but judge of his wonder when, on entering it, he found the long-legged spectre awaiting his return.

"*Banaght dhea orrin!*" he exclaimed, starting back; "the blessin' o' God be upon us! Is it here before me you are?"

"Hould your tongue, man," said the other, with a smile of mysterious triumph. "Is it that you wondher at? Ha, ha! That's little of it!"

"But how did you know my name? or who I was? or where I lived at all? Heaven protect us! It's beyant belief, clane out."

"Hould your tongue," replied the man; "don't be axin' me any thing o' the kind. Clear out both of ye, till I begin my *pisthrogues* wid the sick child. Clear out, I say."

With some degree of apprehension, Larry and Sheelah left the house as they had been ordered, and the Fairy-man having pulled out a flask of poteen administered a dose of it to Phelim; and never yet did patient receive his medicine with such a relish. He licked his lips, and fixed his eye upon it with a longing look.

"Be Gorra," said he, "that's fine stuff entirely. Will you lave me the bottle?"

"No," said the Fairy-man, "but I'll call an' give you a little of it wanst a day."

"Ay do," replied Phelim; "the divil a fear o' me, if I get enough of it. I hope I'll see you often."

The Fairy-man kept his word; so that what with his bottle, a hardy constitution, and light bed-clothes, Phelim got the upper hand of his malady. In a month he was again on his legs; but, alas! his complexion, though not changed to deformity, was wofully out of joint. His prin-

cipal blemish, in addition to the usual marks left by this complaint, consisted in a drooping of his left eye-lid, which gave to his whole face a cast highly ludicrous.

When Phelim felt thoroughly recovered, he claimed a pair of "leather crackers,"[3] a hare-skin cap and a coat, with a pertinacity which kept the worthy couple in a state of inquietude, until they complied with his importunity. Henceforth he began to have everything his own way. His parents, sufficiently thankful that he was spared to them, resolved to thwart him no more.

"It's well we have him at all," said his mother; "sure if we hadn't him, we'd be breakin' our hearts, and sayin' if it 'ud plase God to send him back to us, that we'd be happy even wid givin' him his own way."

"They say it breaks their strinth, too," replied his father, "to be crubbin' them in too much, an' snappin' at thim for every hand's turn, an' I'm sure it does too."

"Doesn't he become the pock-marks well, the crathur?" said the mother.

"Become!" said the father; "but doesn't the droop in his eye set him off all to pieces!"

"Ay," observed the mother, "an' how the crathur went round among all the neighbours to show them the 'leather crackers!' To see his little pride out o' the hare-skin cap, too, wid the hare's ears stickin' out of his temples. That an' the droopin' eye undher them, makes him look so cunnin' an' ginteel, that one can't help havin' their heart fixed upon him."

"He'd look betther still, if that ould coat wasn't sweepin' the ground behind him; an' what 'ud you think to put a pair o' *martyeens* on his legs to hide the mazles? He might go anywhere thin."

"Throth he might; but Larry, what in the world wide could be in the Fairy-man's bottle, that Phelim took sich a likin' for it? He tould me this mornin' that he'd suffer to have the pock agin, set in case he was cured wid the same bottle."

"Well, the Heaven be praised, any how, that we have a son for the half-acre, Sheelah."

"Amin! An' let us take good care of him, now that he's spared to us."

Phelim's appetite, after his recovery, was anything but a joke to his father. He was now seldom at home, except during meal times; for wherever fun or novelty was to be found, Phelim was present. He became a regular attendant upon all the sportsmen. To such he made himself very useful by his correct knowledge of the best covers for game, and the best pools for fish. He was acquainted with every rood of land in the parish; knew with astonishing accuracy where coveys were to be sprung, and hares started. No hunt was without him; such was his wind and speed of foot, that to follow a chase and keep up with the horsemen, was to him only a matter of sport. When day-light passed, night presented him with amusements suitable to itself. No wake, for instance, could escape him; a dance without young Phelim O'Toole would have been

a thing worthy to be remembered. He was zealously devoted to cock-fighting; on Shrove-Tuesday he shouted loudest among the crowd that attended the sport of throwing at cocks tied to a stake; foot-ball and hurling never occurred without him. Bull-baiting—for it was common in his youth—was luxury to him; and, ere he reached fourteen, every one knew Phelim O'Toole as an adept at card-playing. Wherever a sheep, a leg of mutton, a dozen of bread, or a bottle of whisky was put up in a shebeen house, to be played for by the country gamblers at the five and ten, or spoil'd five, Phelim always took a hand and was generally successful. On these occasions he was frequently charged with an over-refined dexterity; but Phelim usually swore, in vindication of his own innocence, until he got black in the face, as the phrase among such characters goes.

The reader is to consider him now about fifteen —a stout, overgrown, unwashed cub. His parents' anxiety that he should grow strong, prevented them from training him to any kind of employment. He was eternally going about in quest of diversion; and wherever a knot of idlers was to be found, there was Phelim. He had, up to this period, never worn a shoe, nor a single article of dress that had been made for himself, with the exception of one or two pair of sheep-skin small clothes. In this way he passed his time, bare-legged, without shoes, clothed in an old coat much too large for him, his neck open, and his sooty locks covered with the hare-skin

cap, the ears as usual sticking out above his brows. Much of his time was spent in setting the idle boys of the village to fight; and in carrying lying challenges from one to another. He himself was seldom without a broken head or a black eye; for in Ireland, he who is known to be fond of quarrelling, as the people say, usually "gets enough an' lavins of it." Larry and Sheelah, thinking it now high time that something should be done with Phelim, thought it necessary to give him some share of education. Phelim opposed this bitterly as an unjustifiable encroachment upon his personal liberty; but by bribing him with the first and only suit of clothes he had yet got, they at length succeeded in prevailing on him to go.

The school to which he was sent, happened to be kept in what is called an Inside Kiln. This kind of kiln is usually—but less so now than formerly—annexed to respectable farmers' out-houses, to which, in agricultural districts, it forms a very necessary appendage. It also serves at the same time as a barn, the kiln-pot being sunk in the shape of an inverted cone at one end, but divided from the barn floor by a wall about three feet high. From this wall beams run across the kiln-pot, over which, in a transverse direction, are laid a number of rafters like the joists of a loft, but not fastened. These ribs are covered with straw, over which again is spread a winnow cloth to keep the grain from being lost. The fire is sunk on a level with the bottom of the kiln-pot, that is, about eight or ten feet below the floor of

the barn. The descent to it is by stairs formed at the side wall. We have been thus minute in describing it, because, as the reader will presently perceive, the feats of Phelim render it necessary.

On the first day of his entering the school, he presented himself with a black eye; and as his character was well known to both master and scholars, the former felt no hesitation in giving him a wholesome lecture upon the subject of his future conduct. For at least a year before this time, he had gained the nick-name of "Blessed Phelim," and "Bouncing," epithets bestowed on him by an ironical allusion to his patron saint, and his own habits.

"So Blessed Phelim," said the master, "you are coming to school!!! Well, well! I only say that miracles will never cease. Arrah, Phelim, will you tell us candidly—ah—I beg your pardon; I mean, will you tell us the best lie you can coin upon the cause of your coming to imbibe moral and literary knowledge? Silence, boys, till we hear Blessed Phelim's lie."

"You must hear it, masther," said Phelim. "I'm comin' to larn to read an' write."

"Bravo! by the bones of Prosodius, I expected a lie, but not such a thumper as that. And you're coming wid a black eye to prove it! A black eye, Phelim, is the blackguard's coat of arms; and to do you justice, you are seldom widout your crest."

For a few days Phelim attended the school, but learned not a letter. The master usually sent him to be taught by the youngest lads, with

a hope of being able to excite a proper spirit of pride and emulation in a mind that required some extraordinary impulse. One day he called him up to ascertain what progress he had actually made; the unsuspecting teacher sat at the time upon the wall which separated the barn-floor from the kiln-pot, with his legs dangling at some distance from the ground. It was summer, and the rafters used in drying the grain had been removed. On finding that Blessed Phelim, notwithstanding all the lessons he had received, was still in a state of the purest ignorance, he lost his temper, and brought him over between his knees, that he might give him an occasional cuff for his idleness. The lesson went on, and the master's thumps were thickening about Phelim's ears, much to the worthy youth's displeasure.

"Phelim," said the master, "I'll invert you as a scarecrow for dunces. I'll lay you against the wall, with your head down and your heels up, like a forked carrot."

"But how will you manage that?" said Phelim. "What 'ud *I* be doin' in the mane time?"

"I'll find a way to manage it," said the master.

"To put my head down an' my heels up, is id?" inquired Phelim.

"You've said it, my worthy," returned his teacher.

"If you don't know the way," replied the pupil, "I'll show you;" getting his shoulder under the master's leg, and pitching him heels over head into the kiln-pot. He instantly seized his cap, and ran out of the school, highly delighted

"If you don't know the way"
Etching from an Original Drawing by Wrightson

"If you don't know the way"
Etching from an Original Drawing by Wrightson

Wightwick

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at his feat; leaving the scholars to render the master whatever assistance was necessary. The poor man was dangerously hurt, for in addition to a broken arm, he received half a dozen severe contusions on the head, and in different parts of the body.

This closed Phelim's education; for no persuasion could ever induce him to enter a school afterwards; nor could any temptation prevail on the neighbouring teachers to admit him as a pupil.

Phelim now shot up rapidly to the stature of a young man; and a graceful slip was he. From the period of fifteen until nineteen, he was industriously employed in idleness. About sixteen he began to look after the girls, and to carry a cudgel. The father in vain attempted to inoculate him with a love of labour; but Phelim would not receive the infection. His life was a pleasanter one. Sometimes, indeed, when he wanted money to treat the girls at fairs and markets, he would prevail on himself to labour a week or fortnight with some neighbouring farmer; but the moment he had earned as much as he deemed sufficient, the spade was thrown aside. Phelim knew all the fiddlers and pipers in the barony; was master of the ceremonies at every wake and dance that occurred within several miles of him. He was a crack dancer, and never attended a dance without performing a horn-pipe on a door or a table; no man could shuffle, or treble, or cut, or spring, or caper with him. Indeed it was said that he could dance "Moll Roe" upon the end of a five gallon keg, and snuff a mould candle

with his heels, yet never lose the time. The father and mother were exceedingly proud of Phelim. The former, when he found him grown up, and associating with young men, began to feel a kind of ambition in being permitted to join Phelim and his companions, and to look upon the society of his own son as a privilege. With the girls Phelim was a beauty without paint. They thought every wake truly a scene of sorrow, if he did not happen to be present. Every dance was doleful without him. Phelim wore his hat on one side, with a knowing but careless air; he carried his cudgel with a good-humoured dashing spirit, precisely in accordance with the character of a man who did not care *a traneen* whether he drank with you as a friend, or fought with you as a foe. Never were such songs heard as Phelim could sing, nor such a voice as that with which he sang them. His attitudes and action were inimitable. The droop in his eye was a standing wink at the girls; and when he sang his funny songs, with what practised ease he gave the darlings a roguish chuck under the chin! Then his jokes! "Why, faix," as the fair ones often said of him, "before Phelim speaks at all, one laughs at what he says." This was fact. His very appearance at a wake, dance, or drinking match, was hailed by a peal of mirth. This heightened his humour exceedingly; for say what you will, the laughter is to wit, what air is to fire —the one dies without the other.

Let no one talk of beauty being on the surface. This is a popular error, and no one but a super-

ficial fellow would defend it. Among ten thousand you could not get a more unfavourable surface than Phelim's. His face resembled the rough side of a cullender, or as he was often told in raillery, "you might grate potatoes on it." The lid of his left eye, as the reader knows, was like the lid of a salt-box, always closed; and when he risked a wink with the right, it certainly gave him the look of a man shutting out the world, and retiring into himself for the purpose of self-examination. No, no; beauty is in the mind; in the soul; otherwise Phelim never could have been such a prodigy of comeliness among the girls. This was the distinction the fair sex drew in his favour. "Phelim," they would say, "is not purty, but he's very comely." "Bad end to the one of him but would stale a pig off a tether, wid his winnin' ways." And so he would too, without much hesitation, for it was not the first time he had stolen his father's.

From nineteen until the close of his minority, Phelim became a distinguished man in fairs and markets. He was, in fact, the hero of the parish; but unfortunately he seldom knew on the morning of the fair-day, the name of the party or faction on whose side he was to fight. This was merely a matter of priority; for whoever happened to give him the first treat, uniformly secured him. The reason of this pliability on his part was, that Phelim being every person's friend, by his good nature, was nobody's foe, except for the day. He fought for fun and for whisky. When he happened to drub some companion or acquaintance

on the opposite side, he was ever ready to express his regret at the circumstance, and abused them heartily for not having treated him first.

Phelim was also a great Ribbonman; and from the time he became initiated into the system, his eyes were wonderfully open to the oppressions of the country. Sessions, decrees, and warrants, he looked upon as gross abuses; assizes, too, by which so many of his friends were put to some inconvenience, he considered as the result of Protestant Ascendancy—cancers that ought to be cut out of the constitution. Bailiffs, drivers, tithe-proctors, tax-gatherers, policemen, and parsons, he thought were vermin that ought to be compelled to emigrate to a much *warmer* country than Ireland.

There was no such hand in the county as Phelim at an *alibi*. Just give him the outline—a few leading particulars of the fact—and he would work wonders. One would think, indeed, that he had been born for that especial purpose; for as he was never known to utter a syllable of truth but once, when he had a design in not being believed, so there was no risk of a lawyer getting truth out of him. No man was ever afflicted with such convenient maladies as Phelim; even his sprains, tooth-aches, and colics, seemed to have entered into the Whiteboy system. But, indeed, the very diseases in Ireland are seditious. Many a time has a tooth-ache come in to aid Paddy in obstructing the course of justice; and a colic been guilty of misprision of treason. Irish deaths, too, are very disloyal, and frequently at

variance with the laws: nor are our births much better; for although more legitimate than those of our English neighbours, yet they are in general more illegal. Phelim, in proving his *alibis*, proved all these positions. On one occasion, "he slep at the prisoner's house, and couldn't close his eye with a thief of a tooth-ache that parsecuted him the whole night;" so that in consequence of having the tooth-ache, it was impossible that the prisoner could leave the house without his knowledge.

Again, the prisoner at the bar could not possibly have shot the deceased, "bekase Mickey slept that very night at Phelim's, an' Phelim, bein' ill o' the colic, never slep at all durin' the whole night; an', by the vartue of his oath, the poor boy couldn't go out o' the house unknownst to him. If he had, Phelim would a seen him, sure."

Again, "Paddy Cummisky's wife tuck ill of a young one, an' Phelim was sent for to bring the midwife; but afore he kem to Paddy's, or hard o' the thing at all, the prisoner, airly in the night, comin' to sit awhile wid Paddy, went for the midwife instead o' Phelim, an' thin they sot up an' had a sup in regard of the 'casion; an' the prisoner never left them at all that night until the next mornin'. An' by the same token, he remimbered Paddy Cummisky barrin' the door, an' shuttin' the windies, bekase it's not lucky to have them open, for fraid that the fairies 'ud throw their *pishthrogues* upon the young one, an' it not christened."

Phelim was certainly an accomplished youth. As an alibist, however, his career was, like that of all alibists, a short one. The fact was, that his face soon became familiar to the court and the lawyers, so that his name and appearance were ultimately rather hazardous to the cause of his friends.

Phelim, on other occasions, when summoned as evidence against his well-wishers or brother Ribbonmen, usually forgot his English, and gave his testimony by an interpreter. Nothing could equal his ignorance and want of common capacity during these trials. His face was as free from every visible trace of meaning as if he had been born an idiot. No block was ever more impenetrable than he.

"What is the noble gintleman sayin'?" he would ask in Irish; and on having that explained, he would inquire, "what is that?" then demand a fresh explanation of the last one, and so on successively, until he was given up in despair.

Sometimes, in cases of a capital nature, Phelim, with the consent of his friends, would come forward and make disclosures, in order to have them put upon their trial and acquitted; lest a real approver, or some one earnestly disposed to prosecute, might appear against them. Now the *alibi* and its usual accompaniments are all of old standing in Ireland; but the master-stroke to which we have alluded is a modern invention. Phelim would bear evidence against them; and whilst the government—for it was mostly in government prosecutions he adventured this—be-

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ner. Larry, as if Phelim were too modest to speak for himself, seldom met a young girl without laying siege to her for the son. He descanted upon his good qualities, glossed over his defects, and drew deeply upon invention in his behalf. Sheelah, on the other hand, was an eloquent advocate for him. She had her eye upon half a dozen of the village girls, to every one of whom she found something to say in Phelim's favour.

But it is time the *action* of our story should commence. When Phelim had reached his twenty-fifth year, the father thought it was high time for him to marry. The good man had, of course, his own motives for this. In the first place, Phelim, with all his gallantry and cleverness, had never contributed a shilling, either towards his own support or that of the family. In the second place, he was never likely to do so. In the third place, the father found him a bad companion; for, in good truth, he had corrupted the good man's morals so evidently, that his character was now little better than that of his son. In the fourth place, he never thought of Phelim, that he did not see a gallows in the distance; and matrimony, he thought, might save him from hanging, as one poison neutralises another. In the fifth place, the half-acre was but a shabby patch to meet the exigencies of the family, since Phelim grew up. "Bouncing Phelim," as he was called for more reasons than one, had the gift of good digestion, along with his other accomplishments; and with such energy was it exercised, that the "half-acre" was frequently

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ceded to these arrangements, the next thing to be done was to pitch upon a proper girl as his wife. This being a more important matter, was thus discussed by the father and son, one evening, at their own fire-side, in the presence of Sheelah.

"Now, Phelim," said the father, "look about you, an' tell us what girl in the neighbourhood you'd like to be married to."

"Why," replied Phelim, "I'll lave that to you; jist point out the girl you'd *like* for your daughther-in-law, an' be she rich, poor, ould, or ugly, *I'll* delude her. That's the chat."

"Ah, Phelim, if you could put your comedher an Gracey Dalton, you'd be a made boy. She has the full of a rabbit-skin o' guineas."

"A made boy! Faith, they say I'm that as it is, you know. But would you *wish* me to put my comedher on Gracey Dalton? Spake out."

"To be sure I would."

"Ay," observed the mother, "or what 'ud you think of Miss Pattherson? That 'ud be the girl. She has a fine farm, an' five hundhre pounds. She's a Protestant, but Phelim could make a Christian of her."

"To be sure I could," said Phelim, "have her thumpin' her breast, and countin' her *Padareens* in no time. Would you wish me to have *her*, mudher?"

"Throth an' I would, avick."

"That 'ud never do," observed the father. "Sure you don't think she'd ever think of the likes o' Phelim?"

"Don't make a goose of yourself, ould man,"

observed Phelim. "Do you think if I set about it, that I'd not manufacture her senses as asy as I'd peel a piatee?"

"Well, well," replied the father, "in the name o' Goodness make up to her. Faith it 'ud be something to have a jauntin' car in the family!"

"Ay, but what the sorra will I do for a suit o' clo'es?" observed Phelim. "I could never go near her in these breeches. My elbows, too, are out o' this ould coat, bad luck to it! An' as for a waistcoat, why, I dunna but it's a sin to call what I'm wearin' a waistcoat at all. Thin agin—why, blood alive sure I can't go to her barefooted, an' I dunna but it 'ud be dacenter to do that same, than to step out in sich excuses for brogues as these. An' in regard o' the stockin's, why, I've pulled them down, sthrivin' to look dacent, till one 'ud think the balls o' my legs is at my heels."

"The sorra word's in that but thruth, any how," observed the father; "but what's to be done? For *we* have no way of gettin' them."

"Faith, I don't know that," said Phelim. "What if we'd borry? I could get the loan of a pair of breeches from Dudley Dwire, an' a coat from Sam Appleton. We might thry Billy Brady for a waistcoat, an' a pair o' stockings. Barny Buckram-back, the pinsioner, 'ud lend me his pumps; an' we want nothing now but a hat."

"Nothin' undher a Caroline 'ud do, goin' there," observed the father.

"I think Father O'Hara 'ud oblage me wid

the loan o' one for a day or two;" said Phelim; "he has two or three o' them, all as good as ever."

"But, Phelim," said the father, "before we go to all this trouble, are you sure you *could* put your comedher on Miss Pattherson?"

"None o' your nonsense," said Phelim, "don't you know I could? I hate a man to be puttin' questions to me, when he knows them himself. It's a fashion *you* have got, an' you ought to dhrop it."

"Well thin," said the father, "let us set about it to-morrow. If we can borry the clo'es, thry your luck."

Phelim and the father, the next morning, set out each in a different direction, to see how far they could succeed on the borrowing system. The father was to make a descent on Dudley Dwire for the breeches, and appeal to the generosity of Sam Appleton for the coat. Phelim himself was to lay his case before the priest, and to assail Buckram-back, the pensioner, on his way home, for the brogues.

When Phelim arrived at the priest's house, he found none of the family up but the housekeeper. After bidding her good morrow, and being desired to sit down, he entered into conversation with the good woman, who felt anxious to know the scandal of the whole parish.

"Aren't you a son of Larry Toole's, young man?"

"I am, indeed, Mrs. Doran. I'm Phelim O'Toole, my mother says."

"I hope you're comin' to spake to the priest about your duty."

"Why, then, be gorra, I'm glad you axed me, so I am—for only you seen the pinance in my face, you'd never suppose sich a thing. I want to make my confishion to him, wid the help o' Goodness."

"Is there any news goin', Phelim?"

"Divil a much, barrin' what you hard yourself, I suppose, about Frank Fogarty, that went mad yesterday, for risin' the meal on the poor, an' ate the ears off himself afore anybody could see him."

"*Vick na hoiah,* Phelim; do you tell me so?"

"Why man o' Moses, is it possible you did not hear it, ma'am?"

"Oh, worra, man alive, not a syllable! Ate the ears off of himself! Phelim, acushla, see what it is to be hard an the poor!"

"Oh, he was ever an' always the biggest nager livin', ma'am. Ay, an' when he was tied up, till a blessed priest 'ud be brought to *malivogue* the divil out of him, he got a scythe an' cut his own two hands off."

"No thin, Phelim!"

"Faitha, ma'am, sure enough. I suppose, ma'am, you hard about Biddy Duignan?"

"Who is she, Phelim?"

"Why, the misfortunate crathur's a daughter of her father's, ould Mick Duignan, of Tavenimore."

"An' what about her, Phelim? What happened her?"

"Faix, ma'am, a bit of a mistake she met wid; but, anyhow, ould Harry Connolly's to stand in the chapel nine Sundays, an' to make three Stations to Lough Dergh for it. Bedad, they say it's as purty a crathur as you'd see in a day's thravellin'."

"Harry Connolly! Why, I know Harry, but I never heard of Biddy Duignan, or her father at all. Harry Connolly! Is it a man that's bent over his staff for the last twenty years! Hut, tut, Phelim, don't say sich a thing."

"Why, ma'am, sure he takes wid it himself; he doesn't deny it at all, the ould sinner."

"Oh, that I mayn't sin, Phelim, if one knows who to thrust in this world, so they don't. Why the desateful ould—hut, Phelim, I can't give into it."

"Faix, ma'am, no wondher; but sure when he confesses it himself! Bedad, Mrs. Doran, I never seen you look so well. Upon my sowl, you'd take the shine out o' the youngest o' thim!"

"Is it me, Phelim? Why you're beside yourself."

"Beside myself, am I? Faith, an' if I am, what I said's thruth, any how. I'd give more nor I'll name, to have so red a pair of cheeks as you have. Sowl, they're thumpers."

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, that I mayn't sin, but that's a good joke! An ould woman near sixty!"

"Now, Mrs. Doran, that's nonsense, an' nothing else. Near sixty! Oh, by my purty, that's runnin' away wid the story entirely—No, nor thirty. Faith I know them that's not more nor

five or six-an'-twenty, that 'ud be glad to borry the loan of your face for a while. Divil a word o' lie in that."

"No, no, Phelim, aroon, I seen the day; but that's past. I remimber when the people *did* say I was worth lookin' at. Won't you sit near the fire? You're in the dhraft there."

"'Thank you kindly, ma'am; faith, you have the name far an' near, for bein' the civilest woman alive this day. But, upon my sowl, if you wor ten times as civil, an' say that you're not aquil to any young girl in the parish, I'd dispute it wid you; an' say it was nothin' else than a bounce."

"Arrah, Phelim, darlin, how can you palaver me that way? I hope your dacent father's well, Phelim, an' your honest mother."

"Divil a fear o' them. Now, I'd hould nine to one that the purtiest o' them hasn't a sweeter mout' than you have. By dad you have a pair o' lips, God bless them that—well, well—"

Phelim here ogled her with looks particularly wistful.

"Phelim, you're losin' the little sense you had."

"Faix, an' it's you that's taken them out o' me, then. A purty woman always makes a fool o' me. Divil a word o' lie in it. Faix, Mrs. Doran, ma'am, you have a chin o' your own! Well, well! Oh, be Gorra, I wish I hadn't come out this mornin' any how!"

"Arrah, why, Phelim? In throth it's you that's the quare Phelim!"

"Why, ma'am—Oh bedad it's a folly to talk.

I can't go widout tastin' them. Sich a pair o' timptations as your lips, barrin' your eyes, I didn't see this many a day."

"Tastin' what, you mad crathur?"

"Why I'll show you what I'd like to be afther tastin'. Oh! bedad, I'll have no refusin'; a purty woman always makes a foo——"

"Keep away, Phelim; keep off—bad end to you; what do you mane? Don't you see Fool Art lyin' in the corner there undher the sacks? I don't think he's asleep."

"Fool Art! why, the misfortunate idiot, what about him? Sure he hasn't sinse to know the right hand from the left. Bedad, ma'am the thruth is, that a purty woman always makes a——"

"Throth an' you won't," said she, struggling.

"Throth an' I will, thin, taste the same lips, or we'll see who's strongest!"

A good-humoured struggle took place between the housekeeper and Phelim, who found her, in point of personal strength, very near a match for him. She laughed heartily, but Phelim attempted to salute her with a face of mock gravity as nearly resembling that of a serious man as he could assume. In the mean time, chairs were overturned, and wooden dishes trundled about; a crash was heard here, and another there. Phelim drove her to the hob, and from the hob they bounced into the fire, the embers and ashes of which were kicked up into a cloud about them.

"Phelim, spare your strinth," said the funny housekeeper, "it won't do. Be asy now, or I'll

get angry. The priest, too, will hear the noise, and so will Fool Art."

"To the divil wid Fool Art, an' the priest, too," said Phelim, "who cares a buckey about the priest when a purty woman like you is consarn——"

"What's this?" said the priest, stepping down from the parlour—"what's the matter? Oh, ho, upon my word, Mrs. Doran! Very good indeed! Under my own roof, too! An' pray, ma'am, who is the gallant? Turn round, young man. Yes, I see! Why, better and better. Bouncing Phelim O'Toole, that never spoke truth! I think, Mr. O'Toole, that when you come a courting, you ought to consider it worth while to appear somewhat more smooth in your habiliments. I simply venture to give that as my opinion."

"Why, sure enough," replied Phelim, without a moment's hesitation, "your Reverence has *found us out.*"

"*Found you out!* Why, is *that* the tone you speak in?"

"Faith, Sir, thruth's best. I wanted her to tell it to you long ago, but she wouldn't. Howsomever, it's still time enough.—Hem! The thruth, Sir, is, that Mrs. Doran an' I is goin' to get the words said as soon as we can; so, Sir, wid the help o' Goodness, I came to see if your Reverence 'ud call us next Sunday wid a blessin'."

Mrs. Doran had, for at least a dozen round years before this, been in a state of hopelessness upon the subject of matrimony; nothing in the shape of a proposal having in the course of that

period come in her way. Now we have Addison's authority for affirming, that an old woman who permits the thoughts of love to get into her head, becomes a very odd kind of animal. Mrs. Doran, to do her justice, had not thought of it for nearly three lustres, for this reason, that she had so far overcome her vanity as to deem it possible that a proposal could be ever made to her. It is difficult, however, to know what a day may bring forth. Here was an offer, dropping like a ripe plum into her mouth. She turned the matter over in her mind with a quickness equal to that of Phelim himself. One leading thought struck her forcibly: if she refused to close with this offer, she would never get another.

"Is it come to this, Mrs. Doran?" inquired the priest.

"Oh, bedad, Sir, she knows it is," replied Phelim, giving her a wink with the safe eye.

Now, Mrs. Doran began to have her suspicions. The wink she considered as decidedly ominous. Phelim, she concluded with all the sagacity of a woman thinking upon *that* subject, had winked at her to assent only for the purpose of getting themselves out of the scrape *for the present*. She feared that Phelim would be apt to break off the match, and take some opportunity, before Sunday should arrive, of preventing the priest from calling them. Her decision, however, was soon made. She resolved, if possible, to pin down Phelim to his own proposal.

"Is this true, Mrs. Doran?" inquired the priest, a second time.

Mrs. Doran could not, with any regard to the delicacy of her sex, give an assent without proper emotion. She accordingly applied her apron to her eyes, and shed a few natural tears in reply to the affecting query of the pastor.

Phelim, in the mean time, began to feel mystified. Whether Mrs. Doran's tears were a proof that she was disposed to take the matter seriously, or whether they were tears of shame and vexation for having been caught in the character of a romping old hoyden, he could not then exactly decide. He had, however, awful misgivings upon the subject.

"Then," said the priest, "it is to be understood that I'm to call you both on Sunday."

"There's no use in keepin' it back from you," replied Mrs. Doran. "I know it's foolish of me; but we have all our failins, and to be fond of Phelim there, is mine. Your Reverence *is* to call us next Sunday, as Phelim tould you. I am sure I can't tell you how he deluded me at all, the desaver o' the world!"

Phelim's face during this acknowledgment was, like Goldsmith's Haunch of Venison, "a subject for painters to study." His eyes projected like a hare's, until nothing could be seen but the balls. Even the drooping lid raised itself up, as if it were never to droop again.

"Well," said the priest, "I shall certainly not use a single argument to prevent you. Your choice, I must say, does you credit, particularly when it is remembered that you have come at least to years of discretion. Indeed, many per-

sons might affirm that you have gone beyond them; but I say nothing. In the mean time your wishes must be complied with. I will certainly call Phelim O'Toole and Bridget Doran on Sunday next; and one thing I know, that we shall have a very merry congregation."

Phelim's eyes turned upon the priest and the old woman alternately, with an air of bewilderment which, had the priest been a man of much observation, might have attracted his attention.

"Oh, murdher alive, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, "how am I to do for clo'es? Faith, I'd like to appear *dacent* in the thing, any how."

"True," said the priest. "Have you made no provision for smoothing the externals of your admirer? Is he to appear in this trim?"

"Bedad, Sir," said Phelim, "we never thought o' that. All the world knows, your Reverence, that I might carry my purse in my eye, an' never feel a mote in it. But the thruth is, Sir, she was so lively on the subject—in a kind of a pleasant, coaxin' hurry of her own—an' indeed I was so myself, too. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Be gorra, Sir, she put her comedher an me entirely, so she did. Well, be my sowl, I'll be the flower of a husband to her anyhow. I hope your Reverence 'ill come to the christ'nin'? But about the clo'es; —bad luck saize the tack I have to put to my back, but what you see an me, if we wor to be married to-morrow."

"Well, Phelim, aroon," said Mrs. Doran, "his Reverence here has my little pences o' money in

his hands, an' the best way is for you to get the price of a suit from him. You must get clo'es, an' good ones, too, Phelim, sooner nor any stop should be put to our marriage."

"Augh, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, ogling her from the safe eye, with a tender suavity of manner that did honour to his heart; "be gorra, Ma'am, you've played the puck entirely wid me. Faith, I'm gettin' fonder an' fonder of her every minute, your Reverence."

He set his eye, as he uttered this, so sweetly and significantly upon the old housekeeper, that the priest thought it a transgression of decorum in his presence.

"I think," said he, "you had better keep your melting looks to yourself, Phelim. Restrain your gallantry, if you please, at least until I withdraw."

"Why, blood alive! Sir, when people's fond of one another, it's hard to keep the love down. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Faith, you've rendhered my heart like a lump o' tallow."

"Follow me to the parlour," said the priest, "and let me know, Bridget, what sum I am to give this melting gallant of yours."

"I may as well get what'll do the weddin' at wanst," observed Phelim. "It'll save throuble, in the first place; an' sackinly, it'll save time; for plase Goodness, I'll have everything ready for houldin' the weddin' the Monday afther the last call. By the hole o' my coat, the minute I get the clo'es we'll be spliced, an' thin for the honeymoon!"

"How much money shall I give him?" said the priest.

"Indeed, Sir, I think you ought to know that; I'm ignorant of what 'ud make a dacent weddin'. We don't intend to get marrid undher a hedge; we've frinds on both sides, an', of coorse, we must have them about us, plase Goodness."

"Be gorra, Sir, it's no wondher I'm fond of her, the darlin'? Bad win to you, Mrs. Doran, how did you come over me at all?"

"Bridget," said the priest, "I have asked you a simple question, to which I expect a plain answer. What money am I to give this tallow-hearted swain of yours?"

"Why, your Reverence, whatsomever you think may be enough for full, an' plinty, an' dacency, at the weddin'."

"Not forgetting the *thatch* for me, in the mane time," said Phelim. "Nothin' less will sarve us, plase your Reverence. Maybe, Sir, you'd think of comin' to the weddin' yourself?"

"There are in my hands," observed the priest, "one hundred and twenty-two guineas of your money, Bridget. Here, Phelim, are ten for your wedding suit and wedding expenses. Go to *your* wedding! No! don't suppose for a moment that I countenance this transaction in the slightest degree. I comply with your wishes, because I heartily despise you both; but certainly this foolish old woman most. Give me an acknowledgment for this, Phelim."

"God bless you, Sir!" said Phelim, as if he had paid them a compliment. "In regard o' the

acknowledgment, Sir, I acknowledge it wid all my heart; but bad luck to the scrape at all I can write."

"Well, no matter. You admit, Bridget, that I give this money to this blessed youth by your authority and consent."

"Surely, your Reverence; I'll never go back of it."

"Now, Phelim," said the priest, "you have the money; pray get married as soon as possible."

"I'll give you my oath," said Phelim; "an' be the blessed iron tongs in the grate there, I'll not lose a day in gettin' myself spliced. Isn't she the tendher-hearted sowl, your Reverence? Augh, Mrs. Doran!"

"Leave my place," said the priest. "I cannot forget the old proverb, that one fool makes many, but an old fool is worse than any. So it is with this old woman."

"Ould woman! Oh, thin I'm sure I don't desarve this from your Reverence!" exclaimed the housekeeper, wiping her eyes: "if I'm a little seasoned now, you know I wasn't always so. If ever there was a faithful sarvant, I was that, an' managed your house and place as honestly as I'll manage my own, plase Goodness."

As they left the parlour, Phelim became the consoler.

"Whisht, you darlin'!" he exclaimed. "Sure you'll have Bouncin' Phelim to comfort you. But now that he has shut the door, what—hem—I'd take it as a piece o' civility if you'd open my eyes a little; I mane—hem—was it—is this doin'

him, or how? Are you—hem—do you *undherstand* me, Mrs. Doran?"

"What is it you want to know, Phelim? I think everything is very plain."

"Oh, the divil a plainer, I suppose. But in the mane time, might one axe, out o' mere curosity, if you're *in airnest?*"

"In airnest! Arrah, what did I give you my money for, Phelim? Well, now that everything is settled, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me."

"A bad *what?*"

"I say, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me. I'm afeared, Phelim, that I'll be too foolish about you—that I'll be too fond of you."

Phelim looked at her in solemn silence, and then replied—"Let us trust in God that you may be enabled to overcome the weakness. Pray to him to avoid all folly, an' above everything, to give you a dacent stock of discration, for it's a mighty fine thing for a woman of your yea—— hem a mighty fine thing it is, indeed, for a sasoned woman, as you say you are."

"When will the weddin' take place, Phelim?"

"The *what?*" said Phelim, opening his brisk eye with a fresh stare of dismay.

"Why, the weddin', acushla. When will it take place? I think the Monday afther the last call 'ud be the best time. We wouldn't lose a day thin. Throth, I long to hear my last call over, Phelim, jewel."

Phelim gave her another look.

"The last call! Thin, by the vestment, you don't long half as much for your *last* call as I do."

"Arrah, Phelim, did you take the—the—what you wor wantin' awhile agone? Throth, myself disremimbers."

"Ay, a round dozen o' them. How can you forget it?"

The idiot in the corner here gave a loud snore, but composed himself to sleep, as if insensible to all that passed.

"Throth, an' I do forget it. Now, Phelim, you'll not go till you take a cup o' tay wid myself. Throth, I do forget it, Phelim darlin' jewel."

Phelim's face now assumed a very queer expression. He twisted his features into all possible directions; brought his mouth first round to one ear and then to the other; put his hand, as if in great pain, on the pit of his stomach; lifted one knee up till it almost touched his chin, then let it down, and instantly brought up the other in a similar manner.

"Phelim, darlin', what ails you?" inquired the tender old nymph. "Wurrah, man alive, aren't you well?"

"Oh, be the vestment," said Phelim, "what's this at all? Murdher sheery, what'll I do! Oh, I'm very bad! At death's door, so I am! Be gorra, Mrs. Doran, I must be off."

"Wurrah, Phelim dear, won't you stop till we settle everything?"

"Oh, purshuin' to the ha'p'orth I can settle

till I recover o' this murdherin' cholic! All's asthray wid me in the inside. I'll see you—I'll see you—*Hanim an dioul!* what's this?—I must be off like a shot—oh, murdher sheery!—but—but—I'll see you to-morrow. In the mane time, I'm—I'm—for ever oblaged to you for—for—lendin' me the—loan of—oh, by the vestments, I'm a gone man!—for lendin' me the *loan* of the ten guineas—Oh, I'm gone!"

Phelim disappeared on uttering these words, and his strides on passing out of the house were certainly more rapid and vigorous than those of a man labouring under pain. In fact, he never looked behind him until one half the distance between the priest's house and his father's cabin had been fairly traversed.

Some misgivings occurred to the old housekeeper, but her vanity, having been revived by Phelim's blarney, would not permit her to listen to them. She had, besides, other motives to fortify her faith in his attachment. First, there was her money, a much larger sum than ever Phelim could expect with any *other* woman, young or old; again, they were to be called on the following Sunday, and she knew that when a marriage affair proceeds so far, obstruction or disappointment is not to be apprehended.

When Phelim reached home, he found the father returned after having borrowed a full suit of clothes for him. Sam Appleton, on hearing from Larry that Bouncing Phelim was about to get a "Great Match,"[4] generously

lent him coat, waistcoat, hat, and small-clothes.

When Phelim presented himself at home, he scarcely replied to the queries put to him by his father and mother concerning his interview with the priest. He sat down, rubbed his hands, scratched his head, rose up, and walked to and fro, in a mood of mind so evidently between mirth and chagrin, that his worthy parents knew not whether to be merry or miserable.

"Phelim," said the mother, "did you take anything while you wor away?"

"Did I take anything! is it? Arrah, be asy, ould woman! Did I take anything! Faith you may say that!"

"Let us know, any how, what's the matther wid you?" asked the father.

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed the son, "what is this for, at all at all? It's too killin' I am, so it is."

"You're not lookin' at Sam Appleton's clo'es," said the father, "that he lent you the loan of, hat an' all?"

"Do you want to put an affront upon me, ould man? To the divil wid himself an' his clo'es! When I want clo'es I'll buy them wid my own money!"

"Larry," observed the mother, "there's yourself all over—as proud as a paycock when the sup's in your head, an' 'ud spake as big widout the sign o' money in your pocket, as if you had the rint of an estate."

"What do you say about the sign o' money?" exclaimed Phelim, with a swagger. "Maybe

you'll call *that* the sign o' money!" he added, producing the ten guineas in gold.

The father and mother looked at it for a considerable time, then at each other, and shook their heads.

"Phelim!" said the father, solemnly.

"Phelim!" said the mother, awfully; and both shook their heads again.

"You wor never over-scrupulous," the father proceeded, "an' you know you have many little things to answer for, in the way of pickin' up what didn't belong to yourself. I think, too, you're not the same boy you wor afore you tuck to swearin' the alibies."

"Faith, an' I doubt I'll have to get some one to swear an alibi for myself soon," Phelim replied.

"Why, blessed hour!" said Larry, "didn't I often tell you never to join the boys in anything that might turn out a hangin' matther?"

"If this is not a hangin' matther," said Phelim, "it's something nearly as bad: it's a marryin' matther. Sure I deluded another since you seen me last. Divil a word o' lie in it. I was clane fell in love wid this mornin' about seven o'clock."

"But how did you get the money, Phelim?"

"Why from the youthful sprig that fell in love wid me. Sure we're to be 'called' in the chapel on Sunday next."

"Why thin now, Phelim! An' who is the young crathur? for in throth she must be young to go to give the money beforehand!"

"Murdher!" exclaimed Phelim, "what's this for! Was ever any one *done* as I am? Who is she! Why she's—oh, murdher, oh!—she's no other than—hem—divil a one else than Father O'Hara's housekeeper, ould Biddy Doran!"

The mirth of the old couple was excessive. The father laughed till he fell off his stool, and the mother till the tears ran down her cheeks.

"Death alive, ould man! but you're very merry," said Phelim. "If you wor my age, an' in such an amplush, you'd laugh on the wrong side o' your mouth. Maybe you'll turn your tune when you hear that she has a hundhre an' twenty guineas."

"An' you'll be rich, too," said the father. "The sprig an' you will be rich!—ha, ha, ha!'

"An' the family they'll have!" said the mother, in convulsions.

"Why, in regard o' that," said Phelim, rather nettled, "if all fails us, sure we can do as my father an' you did: kiss the Lucky Stone, an' make a Station."

"Phelim, aroon," said the mother, seriously, "put it out o' your head. Sure you wouldn't go to bring me a daughther-in-law oulder nor myself?"

"I'd as soon *go over,*"[5] said Phelim; "or *swing* itself, before I'd marry sich a piece o' desate. Hard feedin' to her! how she did me to my face!"

Phelim then entered into a long-visaged detail of the scene at Father O'Hara's, dwelling bit-

terly on the alacrity with which the old housekeeper ensnared him in his own mesh.

"However," he concluded, "she'd be a sharp one if she'd *do* me altogether. We're not married yet; an' I've a consate of my own, that *she's* done for the ten guineas, any how!"

A family council was immediately held upon Phelim's matrimonial prospects. On coming close to the speculation of Miss Patterson, it was somehow voted, notwithstanding Phelim's powers of attraction, to be rather a discouraging one. Gracey Dalton was also given up. The matter was now serious, the time short, and Phelim's bounces touching his own fascinations with the sex in general, were considerably abated. It was therefore resolved, that he ought to avail himself of Sam Appleton's clothes, until his own could be made. Sam, he said, would not press him for them immediately, inasmuch as he was under obligations to Phelim's silence upon some midnight excursions that he had made.

"Not," added Phelim, "but I'm as much, an' maybe more, in his power, than he is in mine."

When breakfast was over, Phelim and the father, after having determined to "drink a bottle" that night in the family of an humble young woman, named Donovan, who, they all agreed, would make an excellent wife for him, rested upon their oars until evening. In the mean time, Phelim sauntered about the village, as he was in the habit of doing, whilst the father kept the day as a holiday. We have never told our readers that Phelim was in love, because in

fact we know not whether he was or not. Be this as it may, we simply inform them, that in a little shed in the lower end of the village, lived a person with whom Phelim was very intimate, called Foodle Flattery. He was, indeed, a man after Phelim's own heart, and Phelim was a boy after his. He maintained himself by riding country races; by handing, breeding, and feeding cocks; by fishing, poaching, and serving processes; and finally, by his knowledge as a cow-doctor and farrier—into the two last of which he had given Phelim some insight. We say the two last, for in most of the other accomplishments Phelim was fully his equal. Phelim frequently envied him his life. It was an idle, amusing, vagabond kind of existence, just such a one as he felt a relish for. This man had a daughter, rather well-looking; and it so happened, that he and Phelim had frequently spent whole nights out together, no one knew on what employment. Into Flattery's house did Phelim saunter with something like an inclination to lay the events of the day before him, and to ask his advice upon his future prospects. On entering the cabin he was much surprised to find the daughter in a very melancholy mood; a circumstance which puzzled him not a little, as he knew that they lived very harmoniously together. Sally had been very useful to her father; and, if fame did not belie her, was sometimes worthy Foodle's assistant in his nocturnal exploits. She was certainly reputed to be "light handed;" an imputation which caused the young men of her

acquaintance to avoid, in their casual conversations with her, any allusion to matrimony.

"Sally, achora," said Phelim, when he saw her in distress, "what's the fun? Where's your father?"

"Oh, Phelim," she replied, bursting into tears, "long runs the fox, but he's cotch at last. My father's in gaol."

Phelim's jaw dropped. "In gaol! *Chorp an diouol,* no!"

"It's thruth, Phelim. Curse upon this Whiteboy business, I wish it never had come into the counthry at all."

"Sally, I must see him; you know I must. But tell me how it happened? Was it at home he was taken?"

"No; he was taken this mornin' in the market. I was wid him sellin' some chickens. What'll you an' Sam Appleton do, Phelim?"

"Uz! Why, what danger is there to aither Sam or me, you darlin'?"

"I'm sure, Phelim, I don't know; but he tould me, that if I was provided for, he'd be firm, an' take chance of his thrial. But, he says, poor man, that it 'ud brake his heart to be thransported, lavin' me behind him wid nobody to take care o' me. He says, too, if anything 'ud make him *stag,* it's fear of the thrial goin' aginst himself; for, as he said to me, what 'ud become of you, Sally, if anything happened me?"

A fresh flood of tears followed this disclosure, and Phelim's face, which was certainly destined

to undergo on that day many variations of aspect, became remarkably blank.

"Sally, you insinivator, I'll hould a thousand guineas you'd never guess what brought me here to-day?"

"Arrah, how could I, Phelim? To plan somethin' wid my fadher, maybe."

"No, but to plan somethin' wid yourself, you coaxin jewel you. Now tell me this—Would you marry a certain gay, roguish, well-built young fellow, they call Bouncin' Phelim?"

"Phelim, don't be gettin' an wid your fun now, an' me in affliction. Sure, I know well you wouldn't throw yourself away upon a poor girl like me, that has nothin' but a good pair of hands to live by."

"Be my sowl, an' you live by them. Well, but set in case—supposin'—that same Bouncin' Phelim was willin' to make you misthress of the Half Acre, what 'ud you be sayin'?"

"Phelim, if a body thought you worn't jokin' them—ah, the dickens go wid you, Phelim—this is more o' your thricks—but if it was thruth you wor spakin', Phelim?"

"It is thruth," said Phelim; "be the vestment, it's nothin' else. Now, say yes or no; for if it's a thing that it's to be a match, you must go an' tell him that I'll marry you, an' he must be as firm as a rock. But see, Sally, by thim five crasses it's not bekase your father's *in* I'm marryin' you at all. Sure I'm in love wid you, acushla! Divil a lie in it. Now, yes or no?"

"Well—troth—to be sure—the sorra one, Phelim, but you have quare ways wid you. Now are you downright in airnest?"

"Be the stool I'm sittin on!"

"Well, in the name o' Goodness, I'll go to my father, an' let him know it. Poor man, it'll take the fear out of his heart. Now can he depind on you, Phelim?"

"Why, all I can say is, that we'll get ourselves called on Sunday next. Let himself, sure, send some one to autorise the priest to call us. An' now that all's settled, don't I desarve somethin'? Oh, be gorra, surely."

"Behave, Phelim—oh—oh—Phelim, now—there you've tuck it—och, the curse o' the crows on you, see the way you have my hair down! There now, you broke my comb, too. Troth, you're a wild slip, Phelim. I hope you won't be goin' on this way wid the girls, when you get married."

"Is it me, you coaxer? No, faith, I'll wear a pair of winkers, for fraid o' lookin' at them at all. Oh, be gorra, no, Sally, I'll lave that to the great people. Sure, they say, the divil a differ *they* make at all."

"Go off now, Phelim, till I get ready, an' set out to my father. But, Phelim, never breathe a word about him bein' in gaol. No one knows it but ourselves—that is, none o' the neighbours."

"I'll sing dumb," said Phelim. "Well, *banaght lath, a rogorah!*[6] Tell him the thruth—to be *game*, an' he'll find you an' me sweeled

together whin he comes out, plase Goodness."

Phelim was but a few minutes gone, when the old military cap of Fool Art projected from the little bed-room, which a wicker wall, plastered with mud, divided from the other part of the cabin.

"Is he gone?" said Art.

"You may come out, Art," said she, "he's gone."

"Ha!" said Art, triumphantly, "I often tould him, when he vexed me an' pelted me wid snow-balls, that I'd come along sides wid him yet. An' it's not over aither. Fool Art can snore when he's not asleep, an' see wid his eyes shut. Wherroo for Art!"

"But, Art, maybe he intinds to marry the housekeeper afther all?"

> "Hi the cholic, the cholic!
> An' ho the cholic for Phelim!"

"Then you think he won't, Art?"

> "Hi the cholic, the cholic!
> An' ho the cholic for Phelim!"

"Now, Art, don't say a word about my father *not* bein' in gaol. He's to be back from my grandfather's in a short time, an' if we manage well, you'll see what you'll get, Art—a brave new shirt, Art."

"Art has the lane for Phelim, but it's not the long one wid no turn in it. Wherroo for Art."

Phelim, on his return home, felt queer; here

was a second matrimonial predicament, considerably worse than the first, into which he was hooked decidedly against his will. The worst feature in this case was the danger to be apprehended from Foodle Flattery's disclosures, should he take it into his head to 'peach upon his brother Whiteboys. Indeed, Phelim began to consider it a calamity that he ever entered into their system at all; for, on running over his exploits along with them, he felt that he was liable to be taken up any morning of the week, and lodged in one of his majesty's boarding-houses. The only security he had was the honesty of his confederates; and experience took the liberty of pointing out to him many cases in which those who considered themselves quite secure, upon the same grounds, either dangled or crossed the water. He remembered, too, some prophecies that had been uttered concerning him with reference both to hanging and matrimony. Touching the former it was often said, that "he'd die where the bird flies"—between heaven and earth; on matrimony, that there seldom was a swaggerer among the girls but came to the ground at last.

Now Phelim had a memory of his own, and in turning over his situation, and the prophecies that had been so confidently pronounced concerning him, he felt, as we said, rather queer. He found his father and mother in excellent spirits when he got home. The good man had got a gallon of whiskey on credit; for it had

been agreed on not to break the ten golden guineas, until they should have ascertained how the match-making would terminate that night at Donovan's.

"Phelim," said the father, "strip yourself, an' put on Sam's clo'es: you must send him down yours for a day or two; he says it's the least he may have the wearin' o' them, so long as you have his."

"Right enough," said Phelim; "Wid all my heart; I'm ready to make a fair swap wid him any day, for that matther."

"I sent word to the Donovans that we're to go to coort there to-night," said Larry; "so that they'll be prepared for us; an' as it would be shabby not to have a friend, I asked Sam Appleton himself. He's to folly us."

"I see," said Phelim, "I see. Well, the best boy in Europe Sam is, for sich a spree. Now, fadher, you must lie like the ould *diouol* to-night. Back everything I say, an' there's no fear of us. 'But about what she's to get, you must hould out for that. I'm to despise it, you know. I'll abuse you for spakin' about fortune, but don't budge an inch."

"It's not the first time I've done that for you, Phelim; but in regard o' these ten guineas, why you must put them in your pocket for fraid they'd be wantin' to get off wid' layin' down guinea for guinea. You see, they don't think *we* have a rap; an' if they propose it we'll be up to them."

"Larry," observed Sheelah, "don't make a match except they give that pig they have. Hould out for that by all means."

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed Phelim, "am I goin' to take the counthry out o' the face? By the vestments, I'm a purty boy! Do you know the fresh news I have for yez?"

"Not ten guineas more, Phelim?" replied the father.

"Maybe you soodhered another ould woman," said the mother.

"Be asy," replied Phelim. "No, but by the five crasses, I deluded a young one since I went out!"

The old couple were once more disposed to be mirthful; but Phelim confirmed his assertion with such a multiplicity of oaths, that they believed him. Nothing, however, could wring the secret of her name out of him. He had reasons for concealing it which he did not wish to divulge. In fact, he could never endure ridicule, and the name of Sally Flattery, as the person whom he had "deluded," would constitute, on his part, a triumph quite as sorry as that which he had achieved in Father O'Hara's. In Ireland no man ever thinks of marrying a female thief—which Sally was strongly suspected to be—except some worthy fellow, who happens to be gifted with the same propensity.

When the proper hour arrived, honest Phelim, after having already made arrangements to be called on the following Sunday, as the intended husband of two females, now proceeded with

great coolness to make, if possible, a similar engagement with a third.

There is something, however, to be said for Phelim. His conquest over the housekeeper was considerably out of the common course of love affairs. He had drawn upon his invention, only to bring himself and the old woman out of the ridiculous predicament in which the priest found them. He had, moreover, intended to prevail on her to lend him the hat, in case the priest himself had refused him. He was consequently not prepared for the vigorous manner in which Mrs. Doran fastened upon the subject of matrimony. On suspecting that she was inclined to be serious, he pleaded his want of proper apparel; but here again the liberality of the housekeeper silenced him, whilst, at the same time, it opened an excellent prospect of procuring that which he most required—a decent suit of clothes. This induced him to act a part that he did not feel. He saw the old woman was resolved to outwit him, and he resolved to overreach the old woman.

His marriage with Sally Flattery was to be merely a matter of chance. If he married her at all, he knew it must be in self-defence. He felt that her father had him in his power, and that he was anything but a man to be depended on. He also thought that his being called with her, on the Sunday following, would neutralise his call with the housekeeper; just as positive and negative quantities in algebra cancel each other. But he was quite ignorant that the story

of Flattery's imprisonment was merely a plan of the daughter's to induce him to marry her.

With respect to Peggy Donovan, he intended, should he succeed in extricating himself from the meshes which the other two had thrown around him, that she should be the elected one to whom he was anxious to unite himself. As to the confusion produced by being called to three at once, he knew that, however laughable in itself, it would be precisely something like what the parish would expect from *him*. Bouncing Phelim was no common man, and to be called to three on the same Sunday, would be a corroboration of his influence with the sex. It certainly chagrined him not a little that one of them was an old woman, and the other of indifferent morals; but still it exhibited the claim of three women upon one man, and that satisfied him. His mode of proceeding with Peggy Donovan was regular, and according to the usages of the country. The notice had been given that he and his father would go a courting, and of course they brought the whiskey with them, that being the custom among persons in their circumstances in life. These humble courtships very much resemble the driving of a bargain between two chapmen; for, indeed, the closeness of the demands on the one side, and the reluctance of concession on the other, are almost incredible. Many a time has a match been broken up by a refusal on the one part, to give a slip of a pig, or a pair of blankets, or a year old calf. These are small matters in themselves, but they

are of importance to those who, perhaps, have nothing else on earth with which to begin the world.

The house to which Phelim and his father directed themselves was, like their own, of the humblest description. The floor of it was about sixteen feet by twelve; its furniture rude and scanty. To the right of the fire was a bed, the four posts of which ran up to the low roof; it was curtained with straw mats, with the exception of an opening about a foot and a half wide on the side next the fire, through which those who slept in it passed. A little below the foot of the bed were ranged a few shelves of deal, supported by pins of wood driven into the wall. These constituted the dresser. In the lower end of the house stood a potato-bin, made up of stakes driven into the floor, and wrought with strong wicker-work. Tied to another stake beside this bin stood a cow, whose hinder part projected so close to the door, that those who entered the cabin were compelled to push her over out of their way. This, indeed, was effected without much difficulty, for the animal became so habituated to the necessity of moving aside, that it was only necessary to lay the hand upon her. Above the door in the inside, almost touching the roof, was the hen-roost, made also of wicker-work; and opposite the bed, on the other side of the fire, stood a meal chest, its lid on a level with the little pane of glass which served as a window. An old straw chair, a few stools, a couple of pots, some

wooden vessels and crockery, completed the furniture of the house. The pig to which Sheelah alluded was not kept within the cabin, that filthy custom being now less common than formerly.

This catalogue of cottage furniture may appear to our English readers very miserable. We beg them to believe, however, that if every cabin in Ireland were equally comfortable, the country would be comparatively happy. Still it is to be remembered, that the *dramatis personæ* of our story are of the humblest class.

When seven o'clock drew nigh, the inmates of this little cabin placed themselves at a clear fire; the father at one side, the mother at the other, and the daughter directly between them, knitting, for this is usually the occupation of a female on such a night. Everything in the house was clean; the floor swept; the ashes removed from the hearth; the parents in their best clothes, and the daughter also in her holiday apparel. She was a plain girl, neither remarkable for beauty, nor otherwise. Her eyes, however, were good, so were her teeth, and an anxious look, produced of course by an occasion so interesting to a female, heightened her complexion to a blush that became her. The creature had certainly made the most of her little finery. Her face shone like that of a child after a fresh scrubbing with a strong towel; her hair, carefully curled with the hot blade of a knife, had been smoothed with soap until it became lustrous by repeated polishing, and her best red

ribbon was tied tightly about it in a smart knot, that stood out on the side of her head with something of a coquettish air. Old Donovan and his wife maintained a conversation upon some indifferent subject, but the daughter evidently paid little attention to what they said. It being near the hour appointed for Phelim's arrival, she sat with an appearance of watchful trepidation, occasionally listening, and starting at every sound that she thought bore any resemblance to a man's voice or footstep.

At length the approach of Phelim and his father was announced by a verse of a popular song, for singing which Phelim was famous:—

> "A sailor coorted a farmer's daughther
> That lived *contagious* to the Isle of Man.
> A long time coortin', an' still discoorsin'
> Of things consarnin' the ocean wide;
> At linth he saize, 'My own dearest darlint,
> Will you consint for to be my bride?"

"An' so she did consint, the darlin', but what the puck would she do else? God save the family! Paddy Donovan, how is your health? Molly, avourneen, I'm glad to hear that you're thrivin'. An' Peggy—eh? Ah, be gorra, fadher, here's somethin' to look at! Give us the hand of you, you bloomer! Och, och! faith you're the daisey!"

"Phelim," said the father, "will you behave yourself? Haven't you the night before you for your capers? Paddy Donovan, I'm glad to see you! Molly, give us your right hand, for, in troth, I have a regard for you! Peggy, dear,

how are you? But I'm sure I needn't be axin' when I look at you! In troth, Phelim, she *is* somethin' to throw your eye at."

"Larry Toole, you're welcome," replied Donovan and his wife, "an' so is your son. Take stools both of you, an' draw near the hearth. Here, Phelim," said the latter, "draw in an' sit beside myself."

"Thank you kindly, Molly," replied Phelim; "but I'll do no sich thing. Arrah, do you think, now, that I'd begin to gosther wid an ould woman, while I have the likes o' Peggy, the darlin', beside me? I'm up to a thrick worth nine of it. No, no; this chest'll do. Sure, you know, I must help the 'duck of diamonds' here to count her stitches."

"Paddy," said Larry, in a friendly whisper, "put this whisky past for a while, barrin' this bottle that we must taste for good luck. Sam Appleton's to come afther us, an', I suppose, some o' your own *cleavens*'ll be here afther a while."

"Thrue for you," said Donovan. "Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin is to come over presently. But, Larry, this is nonsense. One bottle o' whisky was lashins; my Goodness, what'll we be doin' wid a whole gallon?"

"Dacency or nothin', Paddy: if it was my last I'd show sperit, an' why not? Who'd be for the shabby thing?"

"Well, well, Larry, I can't say but you're right afther all! Maybe I'd do the same thing myself, for all I'm spakin' aginst it."

The old people then passed round an introductory glass, after which they chatted away for an hour or so, somewhat like the members of a committee who talk upon indifferent topics until their brethren are all assembled.

Phelim, in the mean time, grappled with the daughter, whose knitting he spoiled by hooking the thread with his finger, jogging her elbow until he ran the needles past each other, and finally unravelling her clew; all which she bore with great good-humour. Sometimes, indeed, she ventured to give him a thwack upon the shoulder, with a laughing frown upon her countenance, in order to correct him for teasing her.

When Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin arrived, the spirits of the party got up. The whisky was formally produced, but as yet the subject of the courtship, though perfectly understood, was not introduced. Phelim and the father were anxious to await the presence of Sam Appleton, who was considered, by the way, a first-rate hand at match-making.

Phelim, as is the wont, on finding the din of the conversation raised to the proper pitch, stole one of the bottles, and prevailed on Peggy to adjourn with him to the potato-bin. Here they ensconced themselves very snugly; but not, as might be supposed, contrary to the knowledge and consent of the seniors, who winked at each other on seeing Phelim gallantly tow her down with the bottle under his arm. It was only the common usage on such occasions, and not considered any violation whatsoever of decorum.

When Phelim's prior engagements are considered, it must be admitted that there was something singularly ludicrous in the humorous look he gave over his shoulder at the company, as he went toward the bin, having the bottom of the whisky-bottle projecting behind his elbow, winking at them in return, by way of a hint to mind their own business and allow him to plead for himself. The bin, however, turned out to be rather an uneasy seat, for as the potatoes lay in a slanting heap against the wall, Phelim and his sweetheart were perpetually sliding down from the top to the bottom. Phelim could be industrious when it suited his pleasure. In a few minutes those who sat about the fire imagined, from the noise at the bin, that the house was about to come about their ears.

"Phelim, you thief," said the father, "what's all that noise for?"

"*Chrosh orrin!*"[7] said Molly Donovan, "is that tundher?"

"Devil carry these piatees," exclaimed Phelim, raking them down with both hands and all his might, "if there's any sittin' at all upon them! I'm levellin' them to prevint Peggy, the darlin', from slidderin', an' to give us time to be talkin' somethin' lovin' to one another. The curse o' Cromwell an them! One might as well dhrink a glass o' whisky wid his sweetheart, or spake a tinder word to her, on the wings of a windmill as here. There now, they're as level as you plase, acushla! Sit down, you jewel you, an' give me the eggshell, till we have our

sup o' the crathur in comfort. Faith, it was too soon for us to be comin' down in the world!"

Phelim and Peggy having each emptied the egg-shell, which among the poorer Irish is frequently the substitute for a glass, entered into the following sentimental dialogue, which was covered by the loud and entangled conversation of their friends about the fire; Phelim's arm lovingly about her neck, and his head laid down snugly against her cheek.

"Now, Peggy, you darlin' o' the world—bad cess to me but I'm as glad as two tenpennies that I levelled these piatees; there was no sittin' an them. Eh, avourneen?"

"Why, we're comfortable now, any how, Phelim!"

"Faith, you may say that—(a loving squeeze.) Now, Peggy, begin an' tell us all about your bachelors."

"The sarra one ever I had, Phelim."

"Oh, murdher sheery, what a bounce! Bad cess to me, if you can spake a word o' thruth afther that, you common desaver! Worn't you an' Paddy Moran pullin' a coard?"

"No, in throth; it was given out on us, but we never wor, Phelim. Nothin' ever passed betune us but common civility. He thrated my father an' mother wanst to share of half a pint in the Lammas Fair, when I was along wid them; but he never broke discoorse wid me, barrin', as I sed, in civility an' friendship."

"An' do you mane to put it down my throath that you never had a sweetheart at all?"

"The nerra one."

"Oh, you thief! Wid two sich lips o' your own, an' two sich eyes o' your own, an' two sich cheeks o' your own! Oh, by the tarn, that won't pass."

"Well, an' supposin' I had—behave Phelim—supposin' I had, where's the harm? Sure it's well known all the sweethearts you had, an' have yet, I suppose."

"Be gorra, an' that's thruth; an' the more the merrier, you jewel you, till one get's married. I had enough o' them, in my day, but you're the flower o' them all, that I'd like to spend my life wid"—(a squeeze.)

"The sorra one word the men say a body can trust. I warrant you tould that story to every one o' them as well as to me. Stop, Phelim—it's well known that what you say to the colleens is no gospel. You know what they christened you 'Bouncin' Phelim' for."

"Betune you an' me, Peggy, I'll tell you a sacret; I *was* the boy for deludin' them. It's very well known the matches I might a' got; but you see, you little shaver, it was waitin' for yourself I was."

"For me! A purty story, indeed! I'm sure it was! Oh, afther that! Why, Phelim, how can you——Well, well, did any one ever hear the likes?"

"Be the vestments, it's thruth. I had you in my eye these three years, but was waitin' till I'd get together as much money as 'ud set us up in the world dacently. Give me that egg-

shell agin. Talkin's dhruthy work. *Shudorth, a rogarah!*[8] an' a pleasant honeymoon to us!"

"Wait till we're marrid first, Phelim; thin it'll be time enough to dhrink *that.*"

"Come, acushla, it's your turn now; taste the shell, an' you'll see how lovin' it'll make us. Mother's milk's a thrifle to it."

"Well, if I take this, Phelim, I'll not touch another dhrop to-night. In the mane time, here's whatever's best for us! Whoo! Oh, my! but that's strong! I dunna how the people can dhrink so much of it!"

"Faith, nor me; except bekase they have a regard for it, an' that it's worth havin' a regard for, jist like yourself an' me. Upon my faix, Peggy, it bates all, the love an' likin' I have for you, an' ever had these three years past. I tould you about the eyes, mavourneen, an'—an'—about the lips——"

"Phelim—behave—I say—now stop wid you—well—well—but you're the tazin' Phelim!—Throth, the girls may be glad when you're married," exclaimed Peggy, adjusting her polished hair.

"Bad cess to the bit, if ever I got so sweet a one in my life—the soft end of a honeycomb's a fool to it. One thing, Peggy, I can tell you—that I'll love you in great style. Whin we're marrid it's I that'll soodher you up. I won't let the wind blow on you. You must give up workin', too. All I'll ax you to do will be to nurse the childhre; an' that same will keep you busy enough, plase Goodness."

"Upon my faix, Phelim, you're the very sarra, so you are. Will you be asy now? I'll engage when you're married, it'll soon be another story wid you. Maybe you'd care little about us thin!"

"Be the vestments, I'm spakin' pure gospel, so I am. Sure you don't know that to be good husbands *runs* in our family. Every one o' them was as sweet as thracle to their wives. Why, there's that ould cock, my fadher, an' if you'd see how he butthers up the ould woman to this day, it 'ud make your heart warm to any man o' the family."

"Ould an' young was ever an' always the same to you, Phelim. Sure the ouldest woman in the parish, if she happened to be single, couldn't miss of your blarney. It's reported you're goin' to be married to an ould woman."

"He—hem—ahem!—Bad luck to this cowld I have! it's stickin' in my throath entirely, so it is!—hem!—to a what?"

"Why, to an ould woman, wid a great deal o' the hard goold!"

Phelim put his hand instinctively to his waistcoat-pocket, in which he carried the housekeeper's money.

"Would you oblage one wid her name?"

"You know ould Molly Kavanagh well enough, Phelim."

Phelim put up an inward ejaculation of thanks.

"To the sarra wid her, an' all sasoned women. God be praised that the night's fine, any how!

Hand me the shell, an' we'll take a *gauliogue* aich, an' afther that we'll begin an' talk over how lovin' an' fond o' one another we'll be."

"You're takin' too much o' the whisky, Phelim. Oh, for Goodness' sake!—oh—b—b—n—now be asy. Faix, I'll go to the fire, an' lave you altogether, so I will, if you don't give over slustherin' me, that way, an' stoppin' my breath."

"Here's all happiness to our two selves, acushla machree! Now thry another *gauliogue,* an' you'll see how deludin' it'll make you."

"Not a sup, Phelim."

"Arrah, nonsense! Be the vestments, it's as harmless as new milk from the cow. It'll only do you good, alanna. Come now, Peggy, don't be ondacent, an' it our first night's coortin'! Blood alive! don't make little o' my father's son on sich a night, an' us at business like this, any how!"

"Phelim, by the crass, I won't take it; so that ends it. Do you want to make little o' me? It's not much you'd think o' me in your mind, if I'd dhrink it."

"The shell's not half full."

"I wouldn't brake my oath for all the whisky in the kingdom; so don't ax me. It's neither right nor proper of you to force it an me."

"Well, all I say is, that it's makin' little of one Phelim O'Toole, that hasn't a thought in his body but what's over head an' ears in love wid you. I must only dhrink it for you myself, thin. Here's all kinds o' good fortune to us!

Now, Peggy,—sit closer to me acushla!—Now, Peggy, are you fond o' me at all? Tell thruth, now."

"Fond o' you! Sure you know all the girls is fond of you. Aren't you 'the boy for deludin' them?'—ha, ha, ha!"

"Come, come, you shaver; that won't do. Be sarious. If you knew how my heart's warmin' to you this minute, you'd fall in love wid my shadow. Come, now, out wid it. Are you fond of a sartin boy not far from you, called Bouncin' Phelim?"

"To be sure I am. Are you satisfied now? Phelim! I say,"—

"Faith, it won't pass, avourneen. That's not the voice for it. Don't you hear *me,* how tendher I spake wid my mouth brathin' into your ear, acushla machree? Now turn about, like a purty entisin' girl, as you are, an' put *your sweet bill* to my ear the same way, an' whisper what you know into it? That's a darlin'! Will you, achora?"

"An' maybe all this time you're promised to another?"

"Be the vestments, I'm not promised to one. Now! Saize the one!"

"You'll say that, any how!"

"Do you see my hands acrass? Be thim five crasses, I'm not promised to a girl livin', so I'm not, nor wouldn't, bekase I had you in my eye. Now will you tell me what I'm wantin' you? The grace o' Heaven light down an you, an' be a good, coaxin' darlin' for wanst. Be this

an' be that, if ever you heerd or seen sich doins an' times as we'll have when we're married. Now the weeny whispher, *a colleen dhas.*"

"It's time enough yet to let you know my mind, Phelim. If you behave yourself an' be ——Why thin is it at the bottle agin you are? Now don't dhrink so much, Phelim, or it'll get into your head. I was sayin' that if you behave yourself, an' be a good boy, I may tell you somethin' soon."

"Somethin' soon! Live horse, an' you'll get grass! Peggy, if that's the way wid you, the love's all on my side, I see clearly. Are you willin' to marry me, any how?"

"I'm willin' to do whatsomever my father an' mother wishes."

"*I'm* for havin' the weddin' off-hand; an' of coorse, if we agree to-night, I think our best plan is to have ourselves called on Sunday. An' I'll tell you what, avourneen,—be the holy vestments, if I was to be 'called' to fifty on the same Sunday, you're the darlin' I'd marry."

"Phelim, it's time for us to go up to the fire; we're long enough here. I thought you had only three words to say to me."

"Why, if you're tired o' me, Peggy, I don't want you to stop. I wouldn't force myself on the best girl that ever stepped."

"Sure you have tould me all you want to say, an' there's no use in us stayin' here. You know, Phelim, there's not a girl in the parish 'ud believe a word that 'ud come out o' your lips. Sure there's none o' them but you coorted

one time or other. If you could get betther, Phelim, I dunna whether you'd be here to-night at all or not."

"Answer me this, Peggy. What do you think your father 'ud be willin' to give you? Not that I care a *crona baun* about it, for I'd marry you wid an inch of candle."

"You know my father's but a poor man, Phelim, an' can give little or nothin'. Them that won't marry me as I am, needn't come here to look for a fortune."

"I know that, Peggy, an' be the same token, I want no fortune at all wid you but yourself, darlin'. In the mane time, to show you that I *could* get a fortune—*Dher a Lorha Heena,* I could have a wife wid a hundhre an' twenty guineas!"

Peggy received this intelligence much in the same manner as Larry and Sheelah had received it. Her mirth was absolutely boisterous for at least ten minutes. Indeed, so loud had it been, that Larry and her father could not help asking:—

"Arrah, what's the fun, Peggy, achora?"

"Oh, nothin'," she replied, "but one o' Phelim's bounces."

"Now," said Phelim, "you won't believe me! Be all the books—"

Peggy's mirth prevented his oaths from being heard. In vain he declared, protested, and swore. On this occasion, he was compelled to experience the fate peculiar to all liars. Even

truth, from his lips, was looked upon as falsehood.

Phelim, on finding that he could neither extort from Peggy an acknowledgment of love, nor make himself credible upon the subject of the large fortune, saw that he had nothing for it now, in order to produce an impression, but the pathetic.

"Well," said he, "you may lave me, Peggy achora, if you like; but out o' this *I'll* not budge, wid a blessing, till I cry my skinful, so I won't. Saize the toe I'll move, now, till I'm sick wid cryin'! Oh, murdher alive, this night! Isn't it a poor case entirely, that the girl I'd suffer myself to be turned inside out for, won't say that she cares about a hair o' my head! Oh, thin, but I'm the misfortunate blackguard all out! Och, of! Peggy, achora, you'll break my heart! Hand me that shell, acushla—for I'm in the height of affliction!"

Peggy could neither withhold it, nor reply to him. Her mirth was even more intense now than before; nor, if all were known, was Phelim less affected with secret laughter than Peggy.

"Is it makin' fun o' me you are, you thief, eh?—Is it laughin' at my grief you are?" exclaimed Phelim. "Be the tarn' o' war, I'll punish you for that."

Peggy attempted to escape, but Phelim succeeded, ere she went, in taking a salutation or two, after which both joined those who sat at the fire, and in a few minutes Sam Appleton entered.

Much serious conversation had already passed in reference to the courtship, which was finally entered into and debated, *pro* and *con*.

"Now, Paddy Donovan, that we're all together, let me tell you one thing, there's not a betther nathur'd boy, nor a stouther, claner young fellow in the parish, than *my* Phelim. He'll make your daughther as good a husband as ever broke bread!"

"I'm not sayin' aginst that, Larry. He *is* a good nathur'd boy: but I tell you, Larry Toole, that *my* daughther's his fill of a wife any day. An' I'll put this to the back o' that—she's a hard-workin' girl, that ates no idle bread."

"Very right," said Sam Appleton. "Phelim's a hairo, an' she's a beauty. Dang me, but they wor made for one another. Phelim, abouchal, why don't you—oh, I see you are. Why, I was goin' to bid you make up to her."

"Give no gosther, Sam," replied Phelim, "but sind round the bottle, an' don't forget to let it come this way. I hardly tasted a dhrop to-night."

"Oh, Phelim!" exclaimed Peggy.

"Whisht!" said Phelim, "there's no use in lettin' the ould fellows be committin' sin. Why they're *hearty*[9] as it is, the sinners."

"Come, nabours," said Burn, "I'm the boy that's for close work. How does the match stand? You're both my friends, an' may this be poison to me, but I'll spake like an honest man, for the one as well as for the other."

"Well, then," said Donovan, "how is Phelim

to support my daughther, Larry? Sure that's a fair questin', any way."

"Why, Paddy," replied Larry, "when Phelim gets her, he'll have a patch of his own, as well as another. There's that 'half acre,' and a bether piece o' land isn't in Europe!"

"Well, but what plenishin' are they to have, Larry? A bare half acre's but a poor look up."

"I'd as soon you'd not make little of it, in the mane time," replied Larry, rather warmly. "As good a couple as ever they wor, lived on that half acre; along wid what they earned by hard work otherwise."

"I'm not disparagin' it, Larry; I'd be long sorry; but about the furniture? What are they to begin the world wid?"

"Hut," said Devlin, "go to the sarra wid yez! —What 'ud they want, no more nor other young people like them, to begin the world wid? Are you goin' to make English or Scotch of them, that never marries till they're able to buy a farm an' stock it, the nagers. By the staff in my hand, an Irishman 'ud lash a dozen 'o them, wid all their prudence! Hasn't Phelim an' Peggy health and hands, what most new-married couples in Ireland begins the world wid? Sure they're not worse nor a thousand others?"

"Success, Antony," said Phelim; "here's your health for that!"

"God be thanked, they have health an' hands," said Donovan. "Still, Antony, I'd like that they'd have somethin' more."

"Well, then, Paddy, spake up for yourself," observed Larry. "What will you put to the fore for the colleen? Don't take both flesh an' bone!"

"I'll not spake up, till I know all that Phelim's to expect," said Donovan. "I don't think he has a right to be axin' anything wid sich a girl as *my* Peggy."

"Hut, tut, Paddy! She's a good colleen enough; but do you think she's above any one that carries the name of O'Toole upon him? Still it's but raisonable for you to wish the girl well settled. *My* Phelim will have one half o' my wordly goods, at all evints."

"Name them, Larry, if you plase."

"Why, he'll have one o' the goats; the grey one, for she's the best o' the two, in throth. He'll have two stools; three hens, an' a toss up for the cock. The biggest o' the two pots; two good crocks; three good wooden trenchers, an—hem—he'll have his own—I say, Paddy, are you listenin' to me?—Phelim, do you hear what I'm givin' you, *a veehonee?—his own bed!* An' there's all I can or will do for him. Now do you spake up for Peggy."

"I'm to have my own bedstead too," said Phelim, "an' bad cess to the stouter one in Europe. "It's as good this minute as it was eighteen years agone."

"Paddy Donovan, spake up," said Larry.

"Spake up!" said Paddy, contemptuously. "Is it for three crowns' worth, I'd spake up? The bedstead, Phelim! *Bedhu husth,*[10] man!"

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim, "we're dhry here."

"Thrue enough, Phelim," said the father. "Paddy, here's towarst you an' yours—nabours—all your healths—young couple! Paddy, give us your hand, man alive! Sure, whether we agree or not, this won't put between us."

"Throth it won't, Larry—an' I'm thankful to you. Your health, Larry, an' all your healths! Phelim an' Peggy, success to yez, whether or not! An' now, in regard o' your civility, I *will* spake up. My proposal is this:—I'll put down guinea for guinea wid you."

Now we must observe, by the way, that this was said under the firm conviction that neither Phelim nor the father had a guinea in their possession.

"I'll do that same, Paddy," said Larry; "but I'll lave it to the present company, if you're not bound to put down the *first* guinea. Nabours, am n't I right!"

"You are right, Larry," said Burn, "it's but fair that Paddy should put down the first."

"Molly, achora," said Donovan to the wife, who by the way, was engaged in preparing the little feast usual on such occasions—"Molly, achora, give me that ould glove you have in your pocket."

She immediately handed him an old shammy glove, tied up into a hard knot, which he felt some difficulty in unloosing.

"Come, Larry," said he, laying down a guinea-note, "cover that like a man."

"Phelim carries my purse," observed the father; but he had scarcely spoken when the laughter of the company rang loudly through the house. The triumph of Donovan appeared to be complete, for he thought the father's allusion to Phelim tantamount to an evasion.

"Phelim! Phelim carries it! Faix, an' I doubt he finds it a light burdyeen."

Phelim approached in all his glory.

"What am I to do?" he inquired, with a swagger.

"You're to cover that guinea note wid a guinea, if you can," said Donovan.

"Whether 'ud you prefar goold or notes," said Phelim, looking pompously about him; "that's the talk."

This was received with another merry peal of laughter.

"Oh, goold—goold by all manes!" replied Donovan.

"Here goes the goold, my worthy," said Phelim, laying down his guinea with a firm slap upon the table.

Old Donovan seized it, examined it, then sent it round, to satisfy himself that it was a *bonâ fide* guinea.

On finding that it was good, he became blank a little; his laugh lost its strength, much of his jollity was instantly neutralised, and his face got at least two inches longer. Larry now had the laugh against him, and the company heartily joined in it.

"Come, Paddy," said Larry, "go an!—ha, ha, ha!"

Paddy fished for half a minute through the glove; and, after what was apparently a hard chace, brought up another guinea, which he laid down.

"Come, Phelim!" said he, and his eye brightened again with a hope that Phelim would fail.

"Good agin!" said Phelim, thundering down another, which was instantly subjected to a similar scrutiny.

"You'll find it good," said Larry. "I wish we had a sackful o' them. Go an, Paddy. Go an, man, who's afeard?"

"Sowl, I'm done," said Donovan, throwing down the purse with a hearty laugh—"give me your hand, Larry. Be the goold afore us, I thought to do you. Sure these two guineas is for my rint, an' we mustn't let them come atween us at all."

"Now," said Larry, "to let you see that my son's not widout something to begin the world wid—Phelim, shill out the rest o' the yallow boys."

"Faix, you ought to dhrink the ould woman's health for this," said Phelim. "Poor ould crathur, many a long day she was savin' up these for me. It's my mother I'm speakin' about."

"An' we will, too," said the father; "here's *Sheelah's* health, neighbours! The best poor man's wife that ever *threwn* a gown over her shouldhers."

This was drunk with all the honours, and the negotiation proceeded.

"Now," said Appleton, "what's to be done? Paddy, say what you'll do for the girl."

"Money's all talk," said Donovan; "I'll give the girl the two-year ould heifer—an' that's worth double what his father has promised Phelim, I'll give her a stone o' flax, a dacent suit o' clo'es, my blessin'—an' there's her fortune."

"Has she neither bed nor beddin'?" inquired Larry.

"Why, don't you say that Phelim's to have his own bed?" observed Donovan. "Sure one bed 'ill be plinty for them."

"I don't care a damn about fortune," said Phelim, for the first time taking a part in the bargain—"so long as I get the darlin' herself. But I think there 'ud be no harm in havin' a spare pair o' blankets—an', for that matther, a bedstead, too—in case a friend came to see a body."

"I don't much mind givin' you a *brother* to the bedstead you have, Phelim," replied Donovan, winking at the company, for he was perfectly aware of the nature of Phelim's bedstead.

"I'll tell you what you must do," said Larry, "otherwise I'll not stand it. Give the colleen a chaff bed, blankets an' all other parts complate, along wid that slip of a pig. If you don't do this, Paddy Donovan, why we'll finish the whisky an' part friends—but it's no match."

"I'll never do it, Larry. The bed an' beddin' I'll give; but the pig *I*'ll by no manner o' manes part wid."

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim, "we're gettin' dhry agin—sayin' nothin' is dhroothy work. Ould man, will you not bother us about fortune!"

"Come, Paddy Donovan," said Devlin, "dang it, let out a little, considher he has ten guineas; an' I give it as my downright maxim an' opinion, that he's fairly entitled to the pig."

"You're welcome to give your opinion, Antony, an' I'm welcome not to care a rotten sthraw about it. *My* daughter's wife enough for him, widout a gown to her back, if he had his ten guineas doubled."

"An' *my* son," said Larry, "is husband enough for a betther girl nor ever called you father—not makin' little, at the same time, of either you or her."

"Paddy," said Burn, "there's no use in spakin' that way. I agree wid Antony, that you ought to throw in the 'slip.'"

"Is it what I have to pay my next gale o' rint wid? No, no! If he won't marry her widout it, she'll get as good that will."

"Saize the 'slip,'" said Phelim, "the darlin' herself here is all the slip I want."

"But I'm not so," said Larry, "the 'slip' must go in, or it's a brake off. Phelim can get girls that has money enough to buy us all out o' root. Did you hear *that,* Paddy Donovan?"

"I hear it," said Paddy, "but I'll b'lieve as much of it as I like."

Phelim apprehended that as his father got warm with the liquor, he might, in vindicating

the truth of his own assertion, divulge the affair of the old housekeeper.

"Ould man," said he, "have sinse, an' pass that over, if you have any regard for Phelim."

"I'd not be brow-bate into anything," observed Donovan.

"Sowl, you would not," said Phelim; "for my part, Paddy, I'm ready to marry your daughther (a squeeze to Peggy) widout a ha'p'orth at all, barrin' herself. It's the girl I want, an' not the slip."

"Thin, be the book, you'll get both, Phelim, for your dacency," said Donovan; "but, you see I wouldn't be bullied into puttin' one foot past the other, for the best man that ever stepped on black leather."

"Whish!" said Appleton, "that's the go! Success ould heart! Give us your hand, Paddy, —here's your good health, an' may you never button an empty pocket!"

"Is all settled?" inquired Molly.

"All, but about the weddin' an' the calls," replied her husband. "How are we to do about that, Larry?"

"Why, in the name o' Goodness, to save time," he replied, "let them be called on Sunday next, the two Sundays afther, an' thin marrid, wid a blessin'."

"I agree wid that entirely," observed Molly; "an' now, Phelim, clear away, you an' Peggy, off o' that chist, till we have our bit o' supper in comfort."

"Phelim," said Larry, "when the supper's

done, you must slip over to Roche's for a couple o' bottles more o' whisky. We'll make a night of it."

"There's two bottles in the house," said Donovan; "an', be the saikerment, the first man that talks of bringin' in more, till these is dhrunk, is ondacent."

This was decisive. In the mean time, the chest was turned into a table, the supper laid, and the attack commenced. All was pleasure, fun, and friendship. The reader may be assured that Phelim, during the negotiation, had not misspent the time with Peggy. Their conversation, however, was in a tone too low to be heard by those who were themselves talking loudly.

One thing, however, Phelim understood from his friend Sam Appleton, which was, that some clew had been discovered to an outrage in which he (Appleton) had been concerned. Above all other subjects, that was one on which Phelim was but a poor comforter. He himself found circumspection necessary; and he told Appleton, that if ever danger approached him, he had resolved either to enlist, or to go to America, if he could command the money.

"*You* ought to do that immediately," added Phelim.

"Where's the money?" replied the other.

"I don't know," said Phelim; "but if I was bent on goin', the want of money wouldn't stop me, as long as it could be found in the counthry. We had to do as bad for others, an' it can't be a greater sin to do that much for ourselves."

"I'll think of it," said Appleton. "At any rate, it's in for a penny, in for a pound, wid me."

When supper was over, they resumed their drinking, sang songs, and told anecdotes with great glee and hilarity. Phelim and Peggy danced jigs and reels, whilst Appleton sang for them, and the bottle also did its duty.

On separating about two o'clock, there was not a sober man among them but Appleton. He declined drinking, and was backed in his abstemiousness by Phelim, who knew that sobriety on the part of Sam would leave himself more liquor. Phelim, therefore, drank for them both, and that to such excess, that Larry, by Appleton's advice, left him at his father's, in consequence of his inability to proceed homewards. It was not, however, without serious trouble that Appleton could get Phelim and the father separated; and when he did, Larry's grief was bitter in the extreme. By much entreaty, joined to some vigorous shoves towards the door, he was prevailed upon to depart without him; but the old man compensated for the son's absence, by indulging in the most vociferous sorrow as he went along, about "*his* Phelim." When he reached home, his grief burst out afresh; he slapped the palms of his hands together, and indulged in a continuous howl, that one on hearing it would imagine to be the very echo of misery. When he had fatigued himself, he fell asleep on the bed, without having undressed, where he lay until near nine o'clock the next morning. Having got up and breakfasted, he related to his wife, with an

aching head, the result of the last night's proceedings. Everything, he assured her, was settled; Phelim and Peggy were to be called the following Sunday, as Phelim, he supposed, had already informed her.

"Where's Phelim?" said the wife; "an' why didn't he come home wid you last night?"

"Where is Phelim? Why, Sheelah, woman, sure he *did* come home wid me last night."

"*Chrush orrin,* Larry, no! What could happen him? Why, man, I thought you knew where he was; an' in regard of his bein' abroad so often at night, myself didn't think it sthrange."

Phelim's absence astounded them both, particularly the father, who had altogether forgotten everything that had happened on the preceding night, after the period of his intoxication. He proposed to go back to Donovan's, to inquire for him, and was about to proceed there when Phelim made his appearance, dressed in his own tender apparel only. His face was three inches longer than usual, and the droop in his eye remarkably conspicuous.

"No fear of him," said the father: "here's himself. Arrah, Phelim, what became of you last night? Where wor you?"

Phelim sat down very deliberately and calmly, looked dismally at his mother, and then looked more dismally at his father.

"I suppose you're sick too, Phelim," said the father. "*My* head's goin' round like a top."

"Ate your breakfast," said his mother; "it's the best thing for you."

"Where wor you last night, Phelim?" inquired the father.

"What are you sain', ould man?"

"Who wor you wid last night?"

"Do, Phelim," said the mother, "tell us, aroon. I hope it wasn't *out* you wor. Tell us, avourneen?"

"Ould woman, what are you talkin' about?"

Phelim whistled "*ulican dhu oh,*" or "the song of sorrow." At length he bounced to his feet, and exclaimed in a loud, rapid voice:—

"*Ma chuirp an diouol!* ould couple, but I'm robbed of my ten guineas by Sam Appleton!"

"Robbed by Sam Appleton! Heavens above!" exclaimed the father.

"Robbed by Sam Appleton! *Gra machree,* Phelim! no, you aren't!" exclaimed the mother.

"*Gra machree yourself!* but I say I am," replied Phelim; "robbed clane of every penny of it!"

Phelim then sat down to breakfast—for he was one of those happy mortals whose appetite is rather sharpened by affliction—and immediately related to his father and mother the necessity which Appleton's connection had imposed on him of leaving the country; adding, that while he was in a state of intoxication, he had been stripped of Appleton's clothes; that his own were left beside him; that when he awoke the next morning, he found his borrowed suit gone; that on searching for his own, he found to his misery,

that the ten guineas had disappeared along with Appleton, who, he understood from his father, had "left the neighbourhood for a while, till the throuble he was in 'ud pass over."

"But I know where he's gone," said Phelim, "an' may the divil's luck go wid him, an' God's curse on the day I ever had anything to do wid that hell-fire Ribbon business! 'Twas he first brought me into it, the villain; an' now I'd give the townland we're in to be fairly out of it."

"*Hanim an diouol!*" said the father, "is the ten guineas gone? The curse of hell upon him, for a black desaver! Where's the villain, Phelim?"

"He's gone to America," replied the son. "The divil tare the tongue out o' myself, too! I should be puttin' him up to go there, an' to get money, if it was to be had. The villain bit me fairly."

"Well, but how are we to manage?" inquired Larry. "What's to be done?"

"Why," said the other, "to bear it, an' say nothin'. Even if he was in his father's house, the double-faced villain has me so much in his power, that I couldn't say a word about it. My curse on the Ribbon business, I say, from my heart out!"

That day was a miserable one to Phelim and the father. The loss of the ten guineas, and the feverish sickness produced from their debauch, rendered their situation not enviable. Some other small matters, too, in which Phelim was especially concerned, independent of the awkward

situation in which he felt himself respecting the three calls on the following day, which was Sunday, added greater weight to his anxiety. He knew not how to manage, especially upon the subject of his habiliments, which certainly were in a very dilapidated state. An Irishman, however, never despairs. If he has not apparel of his own sufficiently decent to wear on his wedding-day, he borrows from a friend. Phelim and his father remembered that there were several neighbours in the village, who would oblige him with a suit for the wedding; and as to the other necessary expenses, they did what their countrymen are famous for—they trusted to chance.

"We'll work ourselves out of it some way," said Larry. "Sure if all fails us, we can sell the goats for the weddin' expenses. It's one comfort that Paddy Donovan must find the dinner; an' all *we* have to get is the whisky, the marriage money, an' some other thrifles."

"They say," observed Phelim, "that people have more luck whin they're married [11] than whin they're single. I'll have a bout at the marriage, so I will; for worse luck I can't have, if I had half a dozen wives, than I always met wid."

"I'll go down," observed Larry, "to Paddy Donovan's, an' send him to the priest's to *give in* your names to be called to-morrow. Faith, it's well that you won't have to appear, or I dunna how you'd get over it."

"No," said Phelim, "that bill won't pass. You must go to the priest yourself, an' see the

curate: if you go near Father O'Hara, it 'ud knock a plan on the head that I've invinted. I'm in the notion that I'll make the ould woman bleed agin. I'll squeeze as much out of her as 'ill bring me to America, for I'm not overly safe here; or, if all fails, I'll marry her, an' run away wid the money. It 'ud bring us all *acrass.*"

Larry's interview with the curate was but a short one. He waited on Donovan, however, before he went, who expressed himself satisfied with the arrangement, and looked forward to the marriage as certain. As for Phelim, the idea of being called to three females at the same time, was one that tickled his vanity very much. Vanity, where the fair sex was concerned, had been always his predominant failing. He was not finally determined on marriage with any of them; but he knew that should he even escape the three, the *éclat* resulting from so celebrated a transaction, would recommend him to the sex for the remainder of his life. Impressed with this view of the matter, he sauntered about as usual; saw Foodle Flattery's daughter, and understood that her uncle had gone to the priest, to have his niece and worthy Phelim called the next day. But besides this hypothesis, Phelim had another, which, after all, was the real one. He hoped that the three applications would prevent the priest from calling him at all.

The priest, who possessed much sarcastic humour, on finding the name of Phelim come in as a candidate for marriage honours with three different women, felt considerably puzzled to

know what he could be at. That Phelim might hoax one or two of them was very probable, but that he should have the effrontery to make *him* the instrument of such an affair, he thought a little too bad.

"Now," said he to his curate, as they talked the matter over that night, "it is quite evident that this scape-grace reckons upon our refusal to call him with *any* of those females to-morrow. It is also certain that not one of the three to whom he has pledged himself is aware that he is under similar obligations to the other two."

"How do you intend to act, Sir?" inquired the curate.

"Why," said Mr. O'Hara, "certainly to call him to each: it will give the business a turn for which he is not prepared. He will stand exposed, moreover, before the congregation, and that will be some punishment to him."

"I don't know as to the punishment," replied the curate. "If ever a human being was free from shame, Phelim is. The fellow will consider it a joke."

"Very possible," observed his superior; "but I am anxious to punish this old woman. It may prevent her from uniting herself with a fellow who certainly would, on becoming master of her money, immediately abandon her—perhaps proceed to America."

"It will also put the females of the parish on their guard against him," said the innocent curate, who knew not that it would raise him highly in their estimation. "We will have a

scene, at all events," said Mr. O'Hara; "for I'm resolved to expose him. No blame can be attached to those whom he has duped, excepting only the old woman, whose case will certainly excite a great deal of mirth. That matters not, however; she has earned the ridicule, and let her bear it."

It was not until Sunday morning that the three calls occurred to Phelim in a new light. He forgot that the friends of the offended parties might visit upon his proper carcase the contumely he offered to them. This, however, did not give him much anxiety, for Phelim was never more in his element than when entering upon a row.

The Sunday in question was fine, and the congregation unusually large: one would think that all the inhabitants of the parish of Teernarogarah had been assembled. Most of them certainly were.

The priest, after having gone through the usual ceremonies of the Sabbath worship, excepting those with which he concludes the mass, turned round to the congregation, and thus addressed them:—

"I would not," said he, "upon any other occasion of this kind, think it necessary to address you at all; but this is one perfectly *unique,* and in some degree patriarchal, because, my friends, we are informed that it was allowed in the times of Abraham and his successors, to keep more than one wife. This custom is about being revived by a modern, who wants, in rather a barefaced manner, to palm himself upon us as a patri-

arch. And who do you think, my friends, this Irish patriarch is? Why, no other than bouncing Phelim O'Toole!"

This was received precisely as the priest anticipated: loud were the shouts of laughter from all parts of the congregation.

"Divil a fear o' Phelim!" they exclaimed. "He wouldn't be himself, or he'd kick up a dust some way."

"Blessed Phelim! Just like him! Faith, he couldn't be marrid in the common coorse!"

"Arrah, whisht till we hear the name o' the happy crathur that's to be blisthered with Phelim! The darlin's in luck, whoever she is, an' has gained a blessed prize in the 'Bouncer.'"

"This bouncing patriarch," continued the priest, "has made his selection with great judgment and discrimination. In the first place, he has pitched upon a hoary damsel of long standing in the world;—one blessed with age and experience. She is qualified to keep Phelim's house well, as soon as it shall be built; but whether she will be able to keep Phelim himself, is another consideration. It is not unlikely that Phelim, in imitation of his great prototypes, may prefer living in a tent. But whether she keeps Phelim or the house, one thing is certain, that Phelim will keep her money. Phelim selected this aged woman, we presume, for her judgment; for surely she who has given such convincing proof of discretion, must make a useful partner to one who, like Phelim, has that virtue yet

to learn. I have no doubt, however, but in a short time he will be as discreet as his teacher."

"Blood alive! Isn't that fine language?"

"You may say that! Begad, it's himself *can* discoorse! What's the Protestants to that?"

"The next upon the list is one who, though a poor man's daughter, will certainly *bring property* to Phelim. There is also an aptness in this selection which does credit to the 'Patriarch.' Phelim is a great dancer, an accomplishment with which we do not read that the patriarchs themselves were possessed; although we certainly do read that a light heel was of little service to Jacob. Well, Phelim carries a light heel, and the second female of his choice on this list carries a 'light hand;' [12] it is, therefore, but natural to suppose that, if ever they are driven to extremities, they will make light of many things which other people would consider as of weighty moment. Whether Phelim and she may long remain stationary in this country, is a problem more likely to be solved at the county assizes than here. It is not improbable that his Majesty may recommend the 'Patriarch' and one of his wives to try the benefit of a voyage to New South Wales, he himself graciously vouchsafing to bear their expenses."

"Divil a lie in that, any how! If ever any one crossed the wather, Phelim will. Can't his Reverence be funny whin he plases?"

"Many a time it was prophecized for him; an' his Reverence knows best."

"Begad, Phelim's gettin' over the coals. But sure it's all the way the father an' mother reared him."

"Tunder-an'-turf, is he goin' to be called to a pair o' them?"

"Faix, so it seems."

"Oh, the divil's clip! Is he mad? But let us hear it out."

"The third damsel is by no means so well adapted for Phelim as either of the other two. What she could have seen in him is another problem much more difficult than the one I have mentioned. I would advise her to reconsider the subject, and let Phelim have the full benefit of the attention she may bestow upon it. If she finds the 'Patriarch' possessed of any *one* virtue, except *necessity,* I will admit that it is pretty certain that she will soon discover the longitude, and that has puzzled the most learned men of the world. If she marries this 'Patriarch,' I think the angels who may visit him will come in the shape of policemen; and that Phelim, so long as he can find a cudgel, will give them anything but a patriarchal reception, is another thing of which we may rest pretty certain.

"I now publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole of Teernarogarah, and Bridget Doran of Dernascobe. If any person knows of any impediment why these two should not be joined in wedlock, they are bound to declare it.

"This Bridget Doran, my friends, is no other than my old housekeeper; but when, where, or

how, Phelim could have won upon her juvenile affections is one of those mysteries which is never to be explained. I dare say, the match was brought about by despair on her side, and necessity on his. She despaired of getting a husband, and he had a necessity for the money. In point of age I admit she would make a very fit wife for any 'Patriarch.'"

Language could not describe the effect which this disclosure produced upon the congregation. The fancy of every one present was tickled at the idea of a union between Phelim and the old woman. It was followed by roars of laughter, which lasted several minutes.

"Oh, thin, the curse o' the crows upon him, was he only able to butther up the ould woman! Oh, *Ghe dhiven!* that flogs. Why, it's a wondher he didn't stale the ould slip, an' make a runaway match of it—ha, ha, ha! Musha, bad scran to her, but she had young notions of her own! A purty bird she picked up in Phelim!—ha, ha, ha!"

"I also publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole of Teernarogarah and Sally Flattery of the same place. If any of you knows of any impediment why they should not be joined in wedlock, you are bound to declare it."

The mirth rose again, loud and general. Foodle Flattery, whose character was so well known, appeared so proper a father-in-law for Phelim, that his selection in this instance delighted them highly.

"Betther an' betther, Phelim! More power to you! You're fixed at last. Foodle Flattery's daughter—a known thief! Well, what harm? Phelim himself has pitch on his fingers—or had, any how, when he was growin' up—for many a thing stuck to them. Oh, bedad, now we know what his Reverence was at when he talked about the 'Sizes, bad luck to them! Betune her an' the ould woman, Phelim 'ud be in Paradise. Foodle Flattery's daughter! Begad, she'll 'bring him property' sure enough, as his Reverence says."

"I also publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole—whom we must in future call the 'Patriarch'—of Teernarogarah, and Peggy Donovan of the same place. If any of you knows of any impediment in the way of their marriage, you are bound to declare it."

"Bravo! Phelim acushla. 'Tis you that's the blessed youth. Tundher-an'-whiskey, did ever any body hear of sich desate? To do three o' them. Be sure the Bouncer has some schame in this. Well, one would suppose Paddy Donovan an' his daughther had more sinse nor to think of sich a runnagate as Bouncin' Phelim."

"No, but the Pathriark! Sure his Reverence sez that we mustn't call him anything agin but the Pathriark! Oh, be gorra, that's the name!—ha, ha, ha!"

When the mirth of the congregation had subsided, and their comments ended, the priest concluded in the following words:—

"Now, my friends, here is such a piece of

profligacy as I have never, in the whole course of my pastoral duties, witnessed. It is the act of Phelim O'Toole, be it known, who did not scruple to engage himself for marriage to three females—that is, to two girls and an old woman—and who, in addition, had the effrontery to send me his name and theirs, to be given out all on the same Sunday; thus making *me* an instrument in his hands to hoax those who trusted in his word. That he can marry but one of them is quite clear; but that he would not scruple to marry the three, and three more to complete the half-dozen, is a fact which no one who knows him will doubt. For my part, I know not how this business may terminate. Of a truth he has contrived to leave the claims of the three females in a state of excellent confusion. Whether it raise or lessen him in their opinion I cannot pretend to determine. I am sorry for Donovan's daughter, for I know not what greater calamity could befall any honest family than a matrimonial union with Phelim O'Toole. I trust that this day's proceedings will operate as a caution to the females of the parish against such an unscrupulous reprobate. It is for this purpose only that I publish the names given in to me. His character was pretty well known before; it is now established; and having established it, I dismiss the subject altogether."

Phelim's fame was now nearly at its height. Never before had such a case been known; yet the people somehow were not so much astonished as might be supposed. On the contrary, had

Phelim's courtship gone off like that of another man, they would have felt more surprised. We need scarcely say, that the "giving out" or "calling" of Phelim and the three damsels was spread over the whole parish before the close of that Sunday. Every one had it—man, woman, and child. It was told, repeated, and improved as it went along. New circumstances were added, fresh points made out, and other *dramatis personæ* brought in—all with great felicity, and quite suitable to Phelim's character.

Strongly contrasted with the amusement of the parishioners in general, was the indignation felt by the three damsels and their friends. The old housekeeper was perfectly furious; so much so, indeed, that the priest gave some dark hints at the necessity of sending for a straight waistcoat. Her fellow-servants took the liberty of breaking some strong jests upon her, in return for which she took the liberty of breaking two strong churn-staves upon them. Being a remarkably stout woman for her years, she put forth her strength, to such purpose that few of them went to bed without sore bones. The priest was seriously annoyed at it, for he found that his house was a scene of battle during the remainder of the day.

Sally Flattery's uncle, in the absence of her father, indignantly espoused the cause of his niece. He and Donovan each went among their friends to excite in them a proper resentment, and to form a faction for the purpose of chastising Phelim. Their chagrin was bitter on finding

that their most wrathful representations of the insult sustained by their families, were received with no other spirit than one of the most extravagant mirth. In vain did they rage, and fume, and swear; they could get no one to take a serious view of it. Phelim O'Toole was the author of all, and from him it was precisely what they had expected.

Phelim himself, and the father, on hearing of the occurrence after mass, were as merry as any other two in the parish. At first, the father was disposed to lose his temper; but on Phelim telling him he would bear no "gosther" on the subject, he thought proper to take it in good humour. About this time they had not more than a week's provision in the house, and only three shillings of capital. The joke of the three calls was too good a one to pass off as an ordinary affair; they had three shillings, and although it was their last, neither of them could permit the matter to escape as a dry joke. They accordingly repaired to the little public house of the village, where they laughed at the world, got drunk, hugged each other, despised all mankind, and staggered home, ragged and merry, poor and hearty, their arms about each other's necks, perfect models of filial duty, and paternal affection.

The reader is aware that the history of Phelim's abrupt engagement with the housekeeper, was conveyed by Fool Art, to Sally Flattery. Her thievish character rendered marriage as hopeless to her, as length of days did to Bridget Doran. No one knew the plan she had

laid for Phelim, but this fool; and in order to secure his silence, she had promised him a shirt on the Monday after the first call. Now Art, as was evident by his endless habit of shrugging, felt the necessity of a shirt very strongly.

About ten o'clock on Monday, he presented himself to Sally, and claimed his recompense.

"Art," said Sally, "the shirt I intended for you, is upon Squire Nugent's hedge beside their garden. You know the family's goin' up to Dublin on Thursday, Art, an' they're gettin' their washin' done in time to be off. Go down, but don't let any one see you; take the third shirt on the row, an' bring it up to me till I smooth it for you."

Art sallied down to the hedge on which the linen had been put out to dry, and having reconnoitred the premises, shrugged himself, and cast a longing eye on the third shirt. With that knavish penetration, however, peculiar to such persons, he began to reflect that Sally might have some other object in view besides *his* accommodation. He determined, therefore, to proceed upon new principles—sufficiently safe, he thought, to protect him from the consequences of theft.

"Good-morrow, Bush," said Art, addressing that on which the third shirt was spread. "Isn't it a burnin' shame an' a sin for you," he continued, "to have sich a fine white shirt an you, an' me widout a stitch to my back. Will you swap?"

Having waited until the bush had due time to reply,

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"Sorra fairer," he observed; "silence gives consint."

In less than two minutes he stripped, put on one of the Squire's best shirts, and spread out his own dusky fragment in its place.

"It's a good thing," said Art, "to have a clear conscience; a fair exchange is no robbery."

Now, it so happened, that the squire himself, who was a humourist, and also a justice of the peace, saw Art putting his morality in practice at the hedge. He immediately walked out with an intention of playing off a trick upon the fool for his dishonesty; and he felt the greater inclination to do this in consequence of an opinion long current, that Art, though he had outwitted several, had never been outwitted himself.

Art had been always a welcome guest in the Squire's kitchen, and never passed the "Big House," as an Irish country gentleman's residence is termed, without calling. On this occasion, however, he was too cunning to go near it—a fact which the Squire observed. By taking a short cut across one of his own fields, he got before Art, and turning the angle of a hedge, met him trotting along at his usual pace.

"Well, Art, where now?"

"To the crass roads, your honour."

"Art, is not this a fine place of mine? Look at these groves, and the lawn, and the river there, and the mountains behind all. Is it not equal to Sir William R——'s?" Sir William was Art's favourite patron.

"Sir William, your honour, has all this at his place."

"But I think my views are finer."

"They're fine enough," replied Art; "*but where's the lake before the door?*"

The Squire said no more about his prospects.

"Art," he continued, "would you carry a letter for me to M——?"

"I'll be wantin' somethin' to dhrink on the way," said Art.

"You shall get something to eat and dhrink before you go," said the Squire, "and half-a-crown for your trouble."

"Augh," exclaimed Art, "be dodda, Sir, you're nosed like Sir William, and chinned like Captain Taylor." This was always Art's compliment when pleased.

The Squire brought him up to the house, ordered him refreshment, and while Art partook of it, wrote a letter or mittimus to the county gaoler, authorising him to detain the bearer in prison until he should hear further from him.

Art, having received the half-crown and the letter, appeared delighted; but on hearing the name of the person to whom it was addressed, he smelt a trick. He promised faithfully, however, to deliver it, and betrayed no symptoms whatever of suspicion. After getting some distance from the big-house, he set his wits to work, and ran over in his mind the names of those who had been most in the habit of annoying him. At the head of this list stood Phelim O'Toole, and on Phelim's

head did he resolve to transfer the revenge, which the Squire, he had no doubt, intended to take on himself.

With considerable speed, he made way to Larry O'Toole's, where such a scene presented itself, as made him for a moment forget the immediate purport of his visit.

Opposite Phelim, dressed out in her best finery, stood the housekeeper, zealously insisting on either money or marriage. On one side of him stood old Donovan and his daughter, whom he had forced to come, in the character of a witness, to support his charges against the gay deceiver. On the other were ranged Sally Flattery, in tears, and her uncle in wrath, each ready to pounce upon Phelim.

Phelim stood the very emblem of patience and good-humour. When one of them attacked him, he winked at the other two; when either of the other two came on, he winked still at those who took breath. Sometimes he trod on his father's toe, lest the old fellow might lose the joke, and not unfrequently proposed their going to a public-house, and composing their differences over a bottle, if any of them would pay the expenses.

"What do you mane to do?" said the housekeeper; "but it's asy known I'm an unprojected woman, or I wouldn't be thrated as I am. If I had relations livin' or near me, we'd pay you on the bones, for bringin' me to shame and scandal, as you have done."

"Upon my *sanies*, Mrs. Doran, I feel for your

situation, so I do," said Phelim. "You've outlived all your friends, an' if it was in my power to bring any o' them back to you I'd do it."

"Oh, you desaver, is that the feelin' you have for me, when I thought you'd be a guard an' a projection to me? You know I have the money, you sconce, an' how comfortable it 'ud keep us, if you'd only see what's good for you. You blarnied an' palavered me, you villain, till you gained my infections, an' thin you tuck the cholic as an excuse to lave me in a state of dissolution an' disparagement. You promised to marry me, an' you had no notion of it."

"You're not the only one he has disgraced, Mrs. Doran," said Donovan. "A purty way he came down, himself an' his father, undher pretence of coortin' my daughther. He should lay down his ten guineas, too, to show us what he had to begin the world wid, the villain!—an' him had no notion of it aither."

"An' he should send this girl to make me go to the priest to have him and her called, the reprobate," said Nick Flattery; "an' him had no notion of it aither."

"Sure he sent us all there," exclaimed Donovan.

"He did," said the old woman.

"Not a doubt of it," observed Flattery.

"Ten guineas!" said the housekeeper. "An' so you brought my ten guineas in your pocket to coort another girl! Aren't you a right profligate?"

"Yes," said Donovan, "aren't you a right profligate?"

"Answer the dacent people," said Flattery; "aren't you a right profligate?"

"Take the world asy, all of ye," replied Phelim. "Mrs. Doran, there was three of you called, sure enough; but, be the vestments, I intinded—do you hear me, Mrs. Doran? Now have rason—I say, do *you* hear me? Be the vestments, I intinded to marry only *one* of you; an' that I'll do still, except I'm vexed—(a wink at the old woman). Yet you're all flyin' at me, as if I had three heads or three tails upon me."

"Maybe the poor boy's not so much to blame," said Mrs. Doran. "There's hussies in this world," and here she threw an angry eye upon the other two, "that 'ud give a man no pace till he'd promise to marry them."

"Why did he promise to them that didn't want him thin?" exclaimed Donovan. "I'm not angry that he didn't marry my daughther—for I wouldn't give her to him now—but I am at the slight he put an her."

"Paddy Donovan, did *you* hear what I said jist now?" replied Phelim. "I wish to Jamini some people 'ud have sinse! Be them five crasses, I know thim I intinded to marry, as well as I do where I'm standin'. That's plain talk, Paddy. I'm sure the world's not past yet, I hope"—(a wink at Paddy Donovan).

"An' wasn't he a big rascal to make little of my brother's daughther as he did?" said Flat-

tery; "but he'll rub his heels together for the same act."

"Nick Flatthery, do you think I could marry three wives? Be that horseshoe over the door, Sally Flatthery, you didn't thrate me dacent. She did not, Nick; an' you ought to know that it was wrong of her to come here to-day."

"Well, but what do you intind to do Phelim, avourn—you profligate?" said the half-angry, half-pacified housekeeper, who, being the veteran, always led on the charge.

"Why, I intend to marry *one* of you," said Phelim. "I say, Mrs. Doran, do you see thim ten fingers acrass—be thim five crasses I'll do what I said, if nothing happens to put it aside."

"Then be an honest man," said Flattery, "an' tell us which o' them you *will* marry."

"Nick, don't you know I always regarded *your* family. If I didn't that I may never do an ill turn! Now! But some people can't see anything. Arra, tundher-an-whisky, man, would you expect me to tell out before all that's here, who I'll marry—to be hurtin' the feelins of the rest. Faith, I'll never do a shabby thing."

"What rekimpinse will you make *my* daughter for bringin' down her name afore the whole parish, along wid them she oughtn't to be named in the one day wid?" said Donovan.

"An' who is that, Paddy Donovan?" said the housekeeper, with a face of flame.

"None of your broad hints, Paddy," said Nick. "If it's a collusion to Sally Flattery you

mane, take care I don't make you ate your words."

"Paddy," exclaimed Phelim, "you oughtn't to be hurtin' their feelins!"—(a friendly wink to Paddy.)

"If you mane me," said the housekeeper, "by the crook on the fire, I'll lave you a mark."

"I mane you for one, thin, since you provoke me," replied Donovan.

"For *one,* is it?" said Nick; "an' who's the other, i' you plase?"

"Your brother's daughter," he replied. "Do you think I'd *even* [18] my daughter to a thief?"

"Be gorra," observed Phelim, "that's too provokin', an' what I wouldn't bear. Will ye keep the pace, I say, till I spake a word to Mrs. Doran? Mrs. Doran, can I have a word or two wid you outside the house?"

"To be sure you can," she replied! "I'd give you fair play, if the *diouol* was in you."

Phelim, accordingly, brought her out, and thus accosted her,—

"Now, Mrs. Doran, you think I thrated you ondacent; but do you see that book?" said he, producing a book of ballads, on which he had sworn many a similar oath before; "Be the contints o' that book, as sure as you're beside me, it's *you* I intind to marry! These other two—the curse o' the crows upon them! I wish we could get them from about the place—is both dyin' for love o' me, an' I surely did promise to get myself *called* to them. They wanted it to be a promise

of marriage; but, says I, 'sure if we're called together it's the same, for whin it comes to that, all's right,—an' so I tould both o' them, unknownst to one another. Arra, be my sowl, you'd make two like them, so you would; an' if you hadn't a penny, I'd marry you afore aither o' them to-morrow. Now, there's the whole sacret, an' don't be onaisy about it. Tell Father O'Hara how it is, whin you go home, an' that he must call the three o' you to me agin, on next Sunday, and the Sunday afther, plase Goodness; jist that I may keep my promise to them. You know I couldn't have luck or grace if I marrid you wid the sin of two broken promises on me."

"My goodness, Phelim, but you tuck a burdyeen off o' me! Faix, you'll see how happy we'll be."

"To be sure we will! But I'm tould you're sometimes crass, Mrs. Doran. Now, you must promise to be kind an' lovin' to the childhre, or, be the vestment, I'll brake off the match yet."

"Och, an' why wouldn't I, Phelim acushla? Sure that's but rason."

"Well, take this book an' swear it. Be gorra, your word won't do, for it's a thing my mind's made up on. It's I that'll be fond o' the childhre."

"An' how am I to swear it, Phelim? for I never tuck an oath myself yet."

"Take the book in your hand, shut one eye, and say the words afther me. Be the contints o' this book."

"Be the contints o' this book,"

"I'll be kind, an' motherly, an' boistherous."
"I'll be kind, an' motherly, an' boistherous,"
"To my own childhre,"
"To my own childhre,"
"An' never bate or abuse thim,"
"An' never bate or abuse thim,"
"Barrin' whin they desarve it;"
"Barrin' whin they desarve it;"
"An' this I swear,"
"An' this I swear,"
"In the presence of *St. Phelim.*"
"In the presence of *St. Phelim.*"
"Amin!"
"Amin!"

"Now, Mrs. Doran, acushla, if you could jist know how asy my conscience is about the childhre, poor crathurs, you'd be in mighty fine spirits. There won't be sich a lovin' husband, begad, in Europe. It's I that'll coax you, an' butther you up like a new pair o' brogues; but, begad, you must be sweeter than liquorice or sugar-candy to me. Won't you, darlin'?"

"Be the crass, Phelim, darlin', jewel, I'll be as kind a wife as ever breathed! Arrah, Phelim, won't you come down to-morrow evenin'? There'll be no one at home but myself an'—ha, ha, ha!—Oh, you coaxin' rogue! But, Phelim, you mustn't be——Oh, you're a rogue! I see you laughin'! Will you come, darlin'?"

"Surely. But, death alive! I was near forgettin'; sure, bad luck to the penny o' the ten guineas but I paid away."

"Paid away! Is it my ten guineas?"

"Your ten guineas, darlin'; an' right well I managed it. Didn't I secure Pat Hanratty's farm by it? Sam Appleton's uncle had it as good as taken; so, begad, I came down wid the ten guineas, by way of airles, an' now we have it. I knew you'd be plased to hear it, an' that you'd be proud to give me ten more for clo'es an' the weddin' expenses. Isn't that good news, avourneen? Eh, you duck o' diamonds? Faith, let Phelim alone! An' another thing—I must call you *Bridget* for the future: it's sweeter an' more lovin'."

"Phelim, I wish you had consulted wid me afore you done it: but it can't be helped. Come down to-morrow evenin', an' we'll see what's to be done."

"The grace o' heaven upon you, but you *are* the winnin'est woman alive this day! Now take my advice, an' go home without comin' in. I'm wantin' to get this other pair off o' my hands, as well as I can; an' our best way is to do all widout noise. Isn't it, darlin'?"

"It is, Phelim, jewel; an' I'll go."

"Faith, Bridget, you've dealt in thracle afore now, you're so sweet. Now, acushla, farewell; an' take care of yourself till to-morrow evenin'!"

Phelim, on re-entering his father's cabin, found Larry and Peggy Donovan placed between her father and Flattery, each struggling to keep them asunder. Phelim at first had been anxious to set them by the ears, but his interview with the old woman changed his plan of operations altogether. With some difficulty he succeeded in

repressing their tendency to single combat, which, having effected, he brought out Flattery and his niece, both of whom he thus addressed:—

"Be the vestment, Sally, only that my regard an' love for you is uncommon, I'd break off the affair altogether, so I would."

"An' why would you do so, Phelim O'Toole?" inquired the uncle.

"Bekase," replied Phelim, "you came here an' made a show of me, when I wished to have no *bruliagh*, at all at all. In regard of Peggy Donovan, I never spoke a word to the girl about marriage since I was christened. Saize the syllable! My father brought me down there to gosther awhile, the other night, an' Paddy sent away for whisky. An' the curse o' Cromwell on myself! I should get tossicated. So while I was half-saes over, the two ould rips set to makin' the match—planned to have us called—an' me knowin' nothin' about it, good, bad, or indifferent. That's the thruth, be the sky above us."

"An' what have you to say about the housekeeper, Phelim?"

"Why I don't know yet who *done* me there. I was about takin' a farm, an' my father borried ten guineas from her. Somebody heard it—I suspect Sam Appleton—an' gave in our names to the priest, to be called, makin' a good joke of it. All sorts o' luck to them, barrin' good luck, that did it; but they put me in a purty state! But never heed! I'll find them out yet. Now go home, both o' you, an' I'll slip down in half an hour, with a bottle o' whisky in my pocket.

We'll talk over what's to be done. Sure Sally here, knows that it's my own intherest to marry her and no one else."

"If my father thought you would, Phelim, he'd not *stag*, even if he was to crass the wather!"

"Go home, Sally darlin' till I get this mad Donovan an' his daughter away. Be all that's beautiful I'll be apt to give him a taste o' my shillely, if he doesn't behave himself! Half an hour I'll be down in—wid the bottle; an' don't you go, Nick, till you see me."

"Phelim," said the uncle, "you know how the case is. You must aither marry the girl, or take a long voyage, abouchal. We'll have no bouncin' or palaver."

"Bedad, Mick, I've great patience wid you," said Phelim, smiling; "go off, I say, both of you."

They then proceeded homewards, and Phelim returned to appease the anger of Donovan, as he had that of the others. Fresh fiction was again drawn forth, every word of which the worthy father corroborated. They promised to go down that night and drink another bottle together; a promise which they knew by the state of their finances, it was impossible to fulfil. The prospect of the "booze," however, tranquillised Donovan, who in his heart relished a glass of liquor as well as either Phelim or the father. Shaking of hands and professions of friendship were again beginning to multiply with great rapidity,

when Peggy thought proper to make a few observations on the merits of her admirer.

"In regard to me," she observed, "you may save yourselves the throuble o' comin'. I wouldn't marry Phelim, afther what the priest said yistherday, if he had the riches o' the townland we're spakin' in. I never cared for him, nor liked him; an' it was only to plase my father an' mother, that I consinted to be called to him at all. I'll never join myself to the likes of him. If I do, may I be a corpse the next minute!"

Having thus expressed herself, she left her father, Phelim, and Larry, to digest her sentiments, and immediately went home.

Donovan, who was outrageous at this contempt of his authority, got his hat, with the intention of compelling her to return and retract, in their presence, what she had said; but the daughter, being the more light-footed of the two, reached home before he could overtake her; where, backed by her mother, she maintained her resolution, and succeeded, ere long, in bringing the father over to her opinion.

During this whole scene in Larry's, Fool Art sat in that wild abstraction which characterises the unhappy class to which he belonged. He muttered to himself, laughed—or rather chuckled—shrugged his shoulders, and appeared to be as unconscious of what had taken place as an automaton. When the coast was clear he rose up, and plucking Phelim's skirt, beckoned him towards the door.

"Phelim," said he, when they had got out, "would you like to airn a crown?"

"Tell me how, Art?" said Phelim.

"A letther from the Square to the gaoler of M—— gaol. If you bring back an answer, you'll get a crown, your dinner, an' a quart o' sthrong beer."

"But why don't you bring it yourself, Art?"

"Why I'm afeard. Sure they'd keep me in gaol, I'm tould, if they'd catch me in it. Aha! Be dodda, I won't go near them: sure they'd hang me for shootin' Bonypart.—Aha!"

"Must the answer be brought back to-day, Art?"

"Oh! It wouldn't do to-morrow at all. Be dodda, no! Five shillins, your dinner, an' a quart of sthrong beer!—Aha! But you must give me a shillin' or two, to buy a sword; for the Square's goin' to make me a captain: thin I'll be grand! an' I'll make you a sargin'."

This seemed a windfall to Phelim. The unpleasant dilemma in which Sally Flattery had placed him, by the fabricated account of her father's imprisonment, made him extremely anxious to see Foodle himself, and to ascertain the *precise* outrage for which he had been secured. Here then was an opportunity of an interview with him, and of earning five shillings, a good dinner, and a quart of strong beer, as already specified.

"Art," said he, "give me the letther, an' I'm the boy that'll soon do the job. Long life to you, Art! Be the contints o' the book, Art, I'll

never pelt you or vex you agin, my worthy; an' I'll always call you captain!"

Phelim immediately commenced his journey to M——, which was only five miles distant, and in a very short time reached the gaol, saw the gaoler, and presented his letter.

The latter, on perusing it, surveyed him with the scrutiny of a man whose eye was practised in scanning offenders.

Phelim, whilst the gaoler examined him, surveyed the strong and massy bolts with which every door and hatchway was secured. Their appearance produced rather an uncomfortable sensation in him; so much so, that when the gaoler asked him his name, he thought it more prudent, in consequence of a touch of conscience he had, to personate Art for the present, inasmuch as he felt it impossible to assume any name more safe than that of an idiot.

"My name is Art Maguire," said he in reply to the gaoler. "I'm messenger to Square S——, the one he had was discharged on Friday last. I expect soon to be made groom, too."

"Come this way," said the gaoler, "and you shall have an answer."

He brought Phelim into the prison-yard, where he remained for about twenty minutes, labouring under impressions which he felt becoming gradually more unpleasant. His anxiety was not lessened on perceiving twenty or thirty culprits, under the management of the turnkeys, enter the yard, where they were drawn up in a line, like a file of soldiers.

"What's *your* name?" said one of the turnkeys.

"Art Maguire," replied Phelim.

"Stand here," said the other, shoving him amongst the prisoners. "Keep your head up, you villain, an' don't be ashamed to look your friends in the face. It won't be hard to identify you, at any rate, you scoundrel. A glimpse of that phiz, even by starlight, would do you, you dog. Jack, tell Mr. S. to bring in the gintlemen—they're all ready."

Phelim's dismay on finding himself under drill with such a villanous crew was indescribable. He attempted to parley with the turnkey, but was near feeling the weight of his heavy keys for daring to approach a man placed in authority.

While thus chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, three gentlemen, accompanied by the gaoler, entered the yard, and walked backward and forward in front of the prisoners, whose faces and persons they examined with great care. For a considerable time they could not recognise any of them; but just as they were about to give up the scrutiny, one of the gentlemen approached Phelim, and looking narrowly into his countenance, exclaimed,

"Here, gaoler, this man I identify. I cannot be mistaken in his face; the rough visage and drooping eye of that fellow put all doubt as to his identity out of question. What's his name?"

"He gives his name, Sir, as Arthur Maguire."

"Arthur what, Sir?" said another of the turn-

keys, looking earnestly at Phelim. "Why, Sir, this is the fellow that swore the alibis for the Kellys—ay, an' for the Delaneys, an' for the O'Briens. His name is Phelim O'Toole; an' a purty boy he is, by all report."

Phelim, though his heart sank within him, attempted to banter them out of their bad opinion of him; but there was something peculiarly dismal and melancholy in his mirth.

"Why, gintlemen—ha, ha!—be gorra, I'd take it as a convanience—I mane, as a favour—if you'd believe me that there's a small taste of mistake here. I was sent by Square S. wid a letter to Mr. S——t, an' he gave me fifty ordhers to bring him back an answer this day. As for Phelim O'Toole, if you mane the rascal that swears the alibis, faith, I can't deny but I'm as like him, the villain, as one egg is to another. Bad luck to his 'dhroop,' any how; little I thought that it would ever bring me into throuble—ha, ha, ha! Mr. S——t, what answer have you for the Square, Sir? Bedad, I'm afeard I'll be late."

"That letter, Master Maguire, or Toole, or whatever your name is, authorises me to detain you, as a prisoner, until I hear further from Mr. S."

"I identify him, distinctly," said the gentleman, once more. "I neither doubt nor waver on the subject; so you will do right to detain him. I shall lodge informations against him immediately."

"Sir," said Phelim to the gaoler, "the Square

couldn't mane me at all, in regard that it was another person he gave the letter to, for to bring to you, the other person gave it to me. I can make my oath of that. Be gorra, you're playin' your thricks upon sthrangers now, I suppose."

"Why, you lying rascal," said the gaoler, "have you not a few minutes ago asserted to the contrary? Did you not tell me that your name was Arthur, or Art Maguire? That you are Mr. S.'s messenger, and expect to be made his groom. And now you deny all this."

"He's Phelim O'Toole," said the turnkey, "I'll swear to him; but if you wait for a minute, I'll soon prove it."

He immediately retired to the cell of a convict, whom he knew to be from the townland of Teernarogarah; and ordering its inmate to look through the bars of his window, which commanded the yard, he asked him if there was any one among them whom he knew.

The fellow in a few minutes replied, "Whethen, divil a one, barrin' bouncin' Phelim O'Toole."

The turnkey brought him down to the yard, where he immediately recognised Phelim as an old friend, shook hands with him, and addressed him by his name.

"Bad luck to you," said Phelim in Irish, "is this a place to welcome your friends to?"

"There is some mystery here," said the gaoler. "I suppose the fact is, that this fellow returned a wrong name to Mr. S., and that that accounts

for the name of Arthur Maguire being in the letter."

All Phelim's attempts to extricate himself were useless. He gave them the proper version of the letter affair with Fool Art, but without making the slightest impression. The gaoler desired him to be locked up.

"Divil fire you all, you villains!" exclaimed Phelim, "is it goin' to put me in crib ye are for no rason in life? Doesn't the whole parish know that I was never off o' my bed for the last three months, wid a complaint I had, antil widin two or three days agone!"

"There are two excellent motives for putting you in crib," said the gaoler; "but if you can prove that you have been confined to your bed so long as you say, why it will be all the better for yourself. Go with the turnkey."

"No, tarenation to the fut I'll go," said Phelim, "till I'm carrid."

"Doesn't the gintleman identify you, you villain," replied one of the turnkeys; "an' isn't the Square's letther in your favour?"

"Villain, is id!" exclaimed Phelim. "An' from a hangman's cousin, too, we're to bear this!—eh? Take that, any how, an' maybe you'll get more when you don't expect it. Whoo! Success, Phelim! There's blood in you still, abouchal!"

He accompanied the words by a spring of triumph from the ground, and surveyed the already senseless turnkey with exultation. In

a moment, however, he was secured for the purpose of being put into strong irons.

"To the devil's warmin' pan wid ye all," he continued, "you may do your worst. I defy you. Ha! by the heavens above me, *you'll* suffer for this, my fine gintleman. What can ye do but hang or thransport me, you villains? I tell ye, if a man's sowl had a crust of sin on it a foot thick, the best way to get it off 'ud be jist to shoot a dozen like you. Sin! Oh, the divil saize the sin at all in it. But wait! Did ye ever hear of a man they call Dan O'Connell? Be my sowl, he'll make yez rub your heels together, for keepin' an innocent boy in gaol, that there's no law or no warrant out for. This is the way we're thrated by thim that's ridin' rough shod over us. But have a taste o' patience, ye scoundrels! It won't last, I can tell yez. Our day will soon come, an' thin I'd recommend yez to thravel for your health. Hell saize the day's pace or happiness ever will be seen in the country, till laws, an' judges, an' juries, an' gaols, an' gaolers, an' turnkeys, an' hangmen, is all swep out of it. Saize the day! An' along wid them, goes the parsons, an' procthors, tithes an' taxes, all to the devil together. That day's not far off, ye d——d villains. An' now I tell ye, that if a hair o' my head's touched—ay, if I was hanged tomorrow—I'd lave *them* behind me that 'ud put a bullet, wid the help an' blessin' o' God, through any one that'll injure me! So lay that to your conscience, an' do your best. Be the crass, O'Connell 'ill make you look nine ways at wanst

for this! He's the boy can put the pin in your noses! He's the boy can make yez thrimble, one an' all o' yez—like a dog in a wet sack! An', wid the blessin' o' God, he'll help us to put our feet on your necks afore long!"

"That's a prudent speech," observed the gaoler; "it will serve you very much."

Phelim consigned him to a very warm settlement in reply.

"Bring the ruffian off," added the gaoler; "put him in solitary confinement."

"Put me wid Foodle Flattery," said Phelim; "you've got *him* here, an' I'll go nowhere else. Faith, you'll suffer for givin' me false imprisonment. Doesn't O'Connell's name make you shake? Put me wid Foodle Flattery, I say."

"Foodle Flattery! There is no such man here. Have you got such a person here?" inquired the gaoler of the turnkey.

"Not at present," said the turnkey; "but I know Foodle well. We've had him here twice. Come away, Phelim; follow me; you're goin' to be put where you'll have an opportunity of sayin' your prayers."

He then ushered Phelim to a cell, where the reader may easily imagine what he felt. His patriotism rose to a high pitch; he deplored the wrongs of his country bitterly, and was clearly convinced that until gaols, judges, and assizes, together with a long train of similar grievances, were utterly abolished, Ireland could never be right, nor persecuted "boys," like himself, at full liberty to burn or murder the enemies of their

country with impunity. Notwithstanding these heroic sentiments, an indifferent round oath more than once escaped him against Ribbonism in whole and in part. He cursed the system, and the day, and the hour on which he was inveigled into it. He cursed those who had initiated him; nor did his father and mother escape for their neglect of his habits, his morals, and his education. This occurred when he had time for reflection. Whilst thus dispensing his execrations, the gaoler and the three gentlemen, having been struck with his allusion to Foodle Flattery, and remembering that Foodle was of indifferent morals, came to the unanimous opinion that it would be a good plan to secure him; and by informing him that Phelim was in prison upon a capital charge, endeavour to work upon his fears, by representing his companion as disposed to turn approver. The state of the country, and Foodle's character justified his apprehension on suspicion. He was accordingly taken, and when certified of Phelim's situation, acted precisely as had been expected. With very little hesitation, he made a full disclosure of the names of several persons concerned in burnings, waylayings, and robbery of arms. The two first names on the list were those of Phelim and Appleton, with several besides, some of whom bore an excellent, and others an execrable character in the country.

The next day Fool Art went to Larry's, where he understood that Phelim was on the missing list. This justified his suspicions of the Squire;

but by no means lessened his bitterness against him, for the prank he had intended to play upon him. With great simplicity, he presented himself at the Big House, and met its owner on the lawn, accompanied by two other gentlemen. The magistrate was somewhat surprised at seeing Art at large, when he imagined him to be under the gaoler's lock and key.

"Well, Art," said he, concealing his amazement, "did you deliver my letter?"

"It went safe, your honour," replied Art.

"Did you yourself give it into his hands, as I ordered you?"

"Whoo! Be dodda, would your honour think Art 'ud tell a lie? Sure he read it. Aha!"

"An' what did he say, Art?"

"Whoo! Why, that he didn't know which of us had the least sense. You for sendin' a fool on a message, or me for deliverin' it."

"Was that all that happened?"

"No, Sir. He said," added the fool, with bitter sarcasm, alluding to a duel, in which the Squire's character had not come off with flying colours—"he said, Sir, that whin you have another challenge to fight, you may get sick *agin* for threepence to the poticarry."

This having been the manner in which the Squire was said to have evaded the duel, it is unnecessary to say that Art's readiness to refresh his memory on the subject, prevented him from being received at the Big House in future.

Reader, remember that we only intended to give you a sketch of Phelim O'Toole's courtship;

we will, however, go so far beyond our original plan, as to apprise you of his fate.

When it became known in the parish that he was in gaol, under a charge of felony, Sally Flattery abandoned all hopes of securing him as a husband. The housekeeper felt suitable distress, and hoped, should the poor boy be acquitted, that "he might hould up his head wid any o' them." Phelim, through the agency of his father, succeeded in getting ten guineas from her, to pay the lawyers for defending him; not one penny of which he applied to the purpose for which he obtained it. The expenses of his defence were drawn from the Ribbon fund, and the Irish reader cannot forget the eloquent and pathetic appeal made by his counsel to the jury on his behalf, and the strength with which the fact of his being the whole support of a helpless father and mother was stated. The appeal, however was ineffectual; worthy Phelim was convicted, and sentenced to transportation for life. When his old acquaintances heard the nature of his destiny, they remembered the two prophecies that had been so often uttered concerning him. One of them was certainly fulfilled to the letter, we mean that in which it was stated, "that the greatest swaggerer among the girls generally comes to the wall at last." The other, though not literally accomplished, was touched at least upon the spirit; transportation for life ranks next to hanging.

We cannot avoid mentioning a fact connected with Phelim which came to light while he re-

mained in prison. By incessant trouble he was prevailed upon, or rather compelled, to attend the prison school, and on examining him, touching his religious knowledge, it appeared that he was ignorant of the plainest truths of Christianity; that he knew not how or by whom the Christian religion had been promulgated; nor, indeed, any other moral truth connected with Revelation.

Immediately after his transportation, Larry took to drink, and his mother to begging, for she had no other means of living. In this mode of life, the husband was soon compelled to join her. They are both mendicants, and Sheelah now appears sensible of the error in their manner of bringing Phelim up.

"Ah! Larry," she is sometimes heard to say, "I doubt that we wor wrong for flyin' in the face o' God, becase he didn't give us childhre. An' when it plased him to grant us a son, we oughtn't to 've spoiled him by over-indulgence, an' by lettin' him have his own head in everything, as we did. If we had sint him to school, an' larned him to work, an' corrected him when he desarved it, instead of laughin' at his lies, an' misbehaviour, and his oaths, as if they wor sport —ay' an' abusin' the nabours when they'd complain of him, or tell us what he was—ay!—if we had, it's a credit an' a comfort he'd be to us now, an' not a shame, an' a disgrace, an' an affliction. We made our own bed, Larry, an' now we must lie down an it. An', God help us! we made *his* bed too, poor boy, an' a hard

one it is. God forgive us! but, any how, my heart's breakin', for bad as he was, sure we haven't him to look upon!"

"Thrue," replied Larry. "Still he was game an' cute to the last. Biddy Doran's ten guineas will sarve him *beyant,* poor fellow. But sure the 'boys' kep their word to him, any how, in regard of shootin' Foodle Flattery. Myself was never betther plased in my life, than to hear that he got the slugs into his heart, the villain!"

***We have attempted to draw Phelim O'Toole as closely as possible to the character of that class, whose ignorance, want of education, and absence of all moral principle, constitute them the shame and reproach of the country. By such men the peace of Ireland is destroyed, illegal combinations formed, blood shed, and nightly outrages committed. There is nothing more certain than this plain truth, that if proper religious and moral knowledge were impressed upon the early principles of persons like Phelim, a conscience would be created capable of revolting from crime. Whatever the grievances of a people may be, whether real or imaginary, one thing is clear, that neither murder nor illegal violence of any description, can be the proper mode of removing or redressing them. We have kept Phelim's Ribbonism in the back-ground, because its details could excite only aversion, and

preferred exhibiting his utter ignorance of morality upon a less offensive subject, in order that the reader might be enabled to infer, rather than to witness with his mind's eye, the deeper crimes of which he was capable.

THE POOR SCHOLAR

One day about the middle of November, in the year 18—, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy were digging potatoes on the side of a hard, barren hill, called Esker Dhu. The day was bitter and wintry, the men were thinly clad, and as the keen blast swept across the hill with considerable violence, the sleet-like rain which it bore along, pelted into their garments with pitiless severity. The father had advanced into more than middle age; and having held, at a rack-rent, the miserable waste of farm which he occupied, he was compelled to exert himself in its cultivation, despite either obduracy of soil, or inclemency of weather. This day, however, was so unusually severe, that the old man began to feel incapable of continuing his toil. The son bore it better; but whenever a cold rush of stormy rain came over them, both were compelled to stand with their sides against it, and their heads turned so as that the ear almost rested back upon the shoulder, in order to throw the rain off their faces. Of each, however, that cheek which was exposed to the rain and storm was beaten into a red hue; whilst the other part of their faces was both pale and hunger-pinched.

The father paused to take breath, and, supported by his spade, looked down upon the

sheltered inland which, inhabited chiefly by Protestants and Presbyterians, lay rich and warm-looking under him.

"Why thin," he exclaimed to the son—a lad about fifteen,—"sure I know well I oughtn't to curse yez, anyway, you black set! an' yit, the Lord forgive me my sins, I'm almost timpted to give yez a volley, an' that from my heart out! Look at thim, Jimmy agra—only look at the black thieves! how warm an' wealthy they sit there in our own ould possessions, an' here we must toil till our fingers are worn to the stumps, upon this thievin' bent. The curse of Cromwell on it!—You might as well ax the divil for a blessin', as expect anything like a dacent crop out of it.—Look at thim two ridges!—such a poor sthring o' praties is in it!—one here an' one there—an' yit we must turn up the whole ridge for that same! Well, God sind the time soon, when the right will take place, Jimmy agrah!"

"An' doesn't Pasthorini say it? Sure whin Twenty-five comes, *we'll* have our own agin: the right will overcome the might—the bottomless pit will be locked—ay, double boulted, if St. Pether gets the kays, for he's the very boy that will accommodate the heretics wid a warm corner; an' yit, faith, there's many o' thim that myself 'ud put in a good word for, afther all."

"Throth, an' here's the same, Jimmy. There's Jack Stuart, an' if there's a cool corner in hell, the same Jack will get it—an' that he may, I pray Gor this day, an' amin. The Lord sind it to him! for he richly desarves it. Kind,

neighbourly, and frindly, is he an' all belongin' to him; an' I wouldn't be where a hard word 'ud be spoken of him, nor a dog in connexion wid the family ill thrated; for which rason may he get a cool corner in hell, I humby sufficate."

"What do you think of Jack Taylor? Will he be cosey?"

"Throth, I doubt so—a blessed youth is Jack; yit myself 'ud hardly wish it. He's a heerum-skeerum, divil-may-care fellow, no doubt of it, an' laughs at the priests, which same I'm thinkin' will get him below stairs more nor a new-milk heat, any way; but thin, agin, he thrates thim dacent, an' gives thim good dinners, an' they take all this rolliken in good part, so that it's likely he's not in airnest in it, an' surely they ought to know best, Jimmy."

"What do you think of *Yallow Sam?—honest Sam,* that they say was born widout a heart, an' carries the *black* wool in his ears, to keep out the cries of the widows an' the orphans, that are long rotten in their graves through his dark villany?—He'll get a snug birth!" [14]

"*Yallow Sam,*" replied the old man, slowly, and a dark shade of intense hatred blackened his weather-beaten countenance, as he looked in the direction from which the storm blew: "'twas *he* left us where we're standin', Jimmy—undher this blast, that's cowldher an' bittherer nor a step-mother's breath, this cuttin' day! 'Twas *he* turned us on the wide world, whin your poor mother was risin' out of her faver. 'Twas he squenched the hearth, whin she wasn't able to

lave the house, till I carried her in my arms into Paddy Cassidy's—the tears fallin' from my eyes upon her face, that I loved next to God. Didn't he give our farm to his bastard son, a purple Orangeman? Out we went, to the winds an' skies of heaven, bekase the rich *bodagh* made intherest aginst us. I tould him whin he chated me out o' my fifteen goolden guineas, that his masther, the landlord, should hear of it; but I could never get next or near him, to make my complaint. Eh?—a snug birth! I'm only afeard that hell has no corner hot enough for him—but lave that to the divil himself: if he doesn't give him the best thratement hell can afford, why I'm not here."

"Divil a one o' the *ould boy's* so bad as they say, father; he gives it to *thim* hot an' heavy, at all evints."

"Why even if he was at a loss about Sam, depind upon it, he'd get a hint from his betthers above, that 'ud be sarviceable."

"They say he visits him as it is, an' that Sam can't sleep widout some one in the room wid him. Dan Philips says the priest was there, an' had a Mass in every room in the house; but Charley Mack tells me there's no thruth in it. He was advised to it, he says; but it seems the ould boy has too strong a hoult of him, for Sam said he'd have the divil any time sooner nor the priest, and its likest what he would say."

"Och, och, Jimmy, avick, I'm tir'd out! We had betther give in; the day's too hard, an' there's no use in standin' agin the weather that's in

it. Lave the ould villian to God, who he can't chate, any way."

"Well, may our curse go along wid the rest upon him, for dhrivin' us to sich an unnatural spot as this! Hot an' heavy, into the sowl an' marrow of him may it penethrate! An' sure that's no more than all the counthry's wishin' him, whether or not—not to mintion the curses that's risin' out o' the grave agin him, loud an' piercin'!"

"God knows it's not slavin' yourself on sich a day as this *you'd* be, only for him. Had we kep our farm, you'd be now well an in your larnin' for a priest—an' there 'ud be one o' the family sure to be a gintleman, any how; but that's gone too, agra. Look at the smoke, how comfortable it rises from Jack Sullivan's, where the priest has a Station to-day. 'Tisn't fishin' for a sthray pratie *he* is, upon a ridge like this. But it can't be helped; an' God's will be done! Not himself!—faix, it's he that'll get the height of good thratement, an' can ride home, well lined, both inside an' outside. Much good may it do him!—'tis but his right."

The lad now paused in his turn, looked down on Jack Sullivan's comfortable house, sheltered by a clump of trees, and certainly saw such a smoke tossed up from the chimney, as gave unequivocal evidence of preparation for a good dinner. He next looked "behind the wind," with a visage made more blank and meagre by the contrast; after which he reflected for a few minutes, as if working up his mind to some sudden

determination. The deliberation, however, was short: he struck his open hand upon the head of the spade with much animation, and instantly took it in both hands, exclaiming:

"Here, father, here goes; to the divil once an' for ever I pitch slavery,"[15] and as he spoke, the spade was sent as far from him as he had strength to throw it. "To the divil I pitch slavery! An' now, father, wid the help o' God, this is the last day's work I'll ever put my hand to. There's no way of larnin' Latin here; but off to Munster I'll start, an' my face you'll never see in this parish, till I come home either a priest an' a gintleman! But that's not all, father dear; I'll rise you out of your distress, or die in the struggle. I can't bear to see your grey hairs in sorrow and poverty."

"Well, Jimmy—well, agra—God enable you, avourneen; 'tis a good intintion. The divil a one o' me will turn another spadeful aither, for this day: I'm *dhrookin'*[16] wid the rain. We'll go home an' take an air o' the fire—we want it; and aftherwards we can talk about what you're *on*[17] for."

It is usual to attribute to the English and Scotch character, exclusively, a cool and persevering energy in the pursuit of such objects as inclination or interest may propose for attainment; whilst Irishmen are considered too much the creatures of impulse to reach a point that requires coolness, condensation of thought, and efforts successively repeated. This is a mistake. It is the opinion of Englishmen and Scotchmen

who know not the Irish character thoroughly. The fact is, that in the attainment of an object, where a sad-faced Englishman would despair, an Irishman will, probably, laugh, drink, weep, and fight, during his progress to accomplish it. A Scotchman will miss it, perhaps, but, having done all that could be done, he will try another speculation. The Irishman may miss it too; but to console himself he will break the head of any man who may have impeded him in his efforts, as a proof that he *ought* to have succeeded; or if he cannot manage that point, he will crack the pate of the first man he meets, or he will get drunk, or he will marry a wife, or swear a gauger never to show his face in that quarter again; or he will exclaim, if it be concerning a farm, with a countenance full of simplicity—"God bless your honour, long life and honour to you, Sir! Sure an' 'twas but a thrifle, any how, that your Reverence will make up for me another time. An' 'tis well I know your Lordship 'ud be the last man on airth to give me the cowld shoulder, so you would, an' I an ould residenthur on your own father's estate, the Lord be praised for that same! An' 'tis a happiness, an' nothin' else, so it is, even if I payed double rint—wherein, maybe, I'm not a day's journey from that same, manin' the double rint, yer honour; only that one would do a great deal for the honour an' glory of livin' undher a raal gintleman—an' that's but rason."

There is, in short, a far-sightedness in an Irishman which is not properly understood, because it

is difficult to understand it. I do not think there is a nation on earth, whose inhabitants mix up their interest and their feelings together more happily, shrewdly, and yet less ostensibly, than Irishmen contrive to do. An Irishman will make you laugh at his joke, while the object of that joke is wrapped up from you in the profoundest mystery, and you will consequently make the concession to a certain point of his character, which has been really obtained by a faculty you had not penetration to discover, or, rather, which he had too much sagacity to exhibit. Of course, as soon as your back is turned, the broad grin is on him, and one of his cheeks is stuck out two inches beyond the other, because his tongue is in it—at your stupidity, simplicity, or folly. Of all the national characters on this habitable globe, I verily believe that that of the Irish is the most profound and unfathomable; and the most difficult on which to form a system, either social, moral, or religious.

It would be difficult, for example, to produce a more signal instance of energy, system, and perseverance than that exhibited in Ireland during the struggle for Emancipation. Was there not flattery to the dust? blarney to the eyes? heads broken? throats cut? houses burned? and cattle houghed? And why? Was it for the *mere pleasure* of blarney—of breaking heads (I won't dispute the last point, though, because I scorn to give up the glory of the national character),—of cutting throats—burning houses —or houghing cattle? No; but to secure

Emancipation. In attaining that object was exemplified the Irish method of gaining a point.

"Yes," said Jemmy, "to the divil I pitch slavery! I will come home able to *rise* yez from your poverty, or never show my face in the parish of Ballysogarth agin."

When the lad's determination was mentioned to his mother and the family, there was a loud and serious outcry against it: for no circumstance is relished that ever takes away a member from an Irish hearth, no matter what the nature of that circumstance may be.

"Och, thin, is it for that *bocaun* [18] of a boy to set off wid himself, runnin' through the wide world afther larnin', widout money or friends! Avourneen, put it out of yer head. No; struggle on as the rest of us is doin', an' maybe ye'll come as well off at the long run."

"Mother dear," said the son, "I wouldn't wish to go agin what you'd say; but I made a promise to myself to *rise* yez out of your poverty if I can, an' my mind's made up on it; so don't cross me, or be the manes of my havin' bad luck on my journey, in regard of me goin' aginst yer will, when you know 'twould be the last thing I'd wish to do."

"Let the gossoon take his way, Vara. Who knows but it was the Almighty put the thoughts of it into his head. Pasthorini says that there will soon be a change, an' 'tis a good skame it 'ill be to have him a *sogarth* when the fat livins will be walkin' back to their ould owners."

"Oh, an' may the Man above grant *that,* I

pray Jamini this day! for aren't we harrished out of our lives, scrapin' an' scramblin' for the black thieves, what we ought to put on our backs, an' into our own mouths. Well, they say it's not lucky to take money from a priest, because it's the price o' sin, an' no more it can, seein' that they want it themselves; but I'm sure it's *their* [19] money that *ought* to carry the bad luck to them, in regard of their gettin' so many bitther curses along wid it."

When a lad from the humblest classes resolves to go to Munster as a poor scholar, there is but one course to be pursued in preparing his outfit. This is by a collection at the chapel among the parishioners, to whom the matter is made known by the priest, from the altar, some Sunday previous to his departure. Accordingly, when the family had all given their consent to Jemmy's project, his father went, on the following day, to communicate the matter to the priest, and to solicit his co-operation in making a collection in behalf of the lad, on the next Sunday but one: for there is always a week's notice given, and sometimes more, that the people may come prepared.

The conversation already detailed between father and son took place on Friday, and on Saturday, a day on which the priest never holds a Station, and, of course, is generally at home, Dominick M'Evoy went to his house with the object already specified in view. The priest was at home; a truly benevolent man, but like the worthies of his day, not overburthened with

learning, though brimful of kindness and hospitality mixed up with drollery and simple cunning.

"Good morning, Dominick!" said the priest, as Dominick entered.

"Good morrow kindly, Sir," replied Dominick: "I hope your Reverence is well, *and* in good health."

"Troth I am, Dominick! I hope there's nothing wrong at home; how is the wife and children?"

"I humbly thank your Reverence for axin'! Troth there's no rason for complainin' in regard o' the health; sarra one o' them but's bravely, consitherin' all things: I believe I'm the worst o' them, myself, yer Reverence. I'm gettin' ould, you see, an' stiff, an' wake; but that's only in the coorse o' nathur; a man can't last always. Wait till them that's young an' hearty *now,* harrows as much as I ploughed in my day, an' they won't have much to brag of. Why, thin, but yer Reverence stands it bravely—faix, wondherfully itself—the Lord be praised! an' it warms my own heart to see you look so well."

"Thank you, Dominick. Indeed, my health, God be thankied, is very good. Ellish," he added, calling to an old female servant—"you'll take a glass, Dominick, the day is cowldish—Ellish, here take the kay, and get some spirits—the *poteen,* Ellish—to the right hand in the cupboard. Indeed, my health is very good, Dominick. Father Murray says he invies me

my appetite, an' I tell him he's guilty of one of the Seven deadly sins."

"Ha, ha, ha!—Faix, an' Invy *is* one o' them sure enough; but a joke is a joke in the mane time. A pleasant gintleman is the same Father Murray, but yer Reverence is too deep for him in the jokin' line, for all that. Ethen, Sir, but it's you that gave ould Cokely the keen cut about his religion—ha, ha, ha! Myself laughed till I was sick for two days afther it—the ould thief!"

"Eh?—Did you hear that, Dominick? Are you sure that's the poteen, Ellish? Ay, an' the best of it all was, that his pathrun, Lord Foxhunter, was present. Come, Dominick, try that—it never seen wather. But the best of it all was—

—"'Well, Father Kavanagh,' said he, 'who put you into the church? Now,' said he, 'you'll come over me wid your regular succession from St. Peter, but I won't allow that.'

"'Why, Mr. Cokely,' says I, back to him, 'I'll give up the succession;' says I, 'and what is more, I'll grant that *you* have been *called* by the Lord, and that *I* have *not;* but the Lord that called you,' says I, 'was *Lord Foxhunter.*' Man, you'd tie his Lordship *wid* a cobweb, he laughed so heartily."

"'Bravo, Father Kavanagh, said he. 'Cokely, you're *bate,*' said he; 'and upon my honour, you must both dine with me to-day,' says he—and capital claret he keeps."

"Your health, Father Kavanagh, an' God

spare you to us! Hah! wather! Oh, the divil a taste itself did the same stuff *see!* Why, thin, I think your Reverence an' me's about an age. I bleeve I'm a thrifle oulder; but I don't bear it so well as you do. The family, you see, an' the childhre, an' the cares o' the world, pull me down: throth, the same family's a throuble to me. I wish I had them all settled safe, any way."

"What do you intind to do with them, Dominick?"

"In throth, that's what brought me to yer Reverence. I've one boy—Jimmy—a smart chap entirely, an' he has taken it into his head to go as a poor scholar to Munster. He's fond o' the larnin', there's not a doubt o' that, an' small blame to him to be sure; but then again, what can I do? He's bint on goin', an' I'm not able to help him, poor fellow, in any shape; so I made bould to see yer Reverence about it, in hopes that you might be able to plan out something for him more betther nor I could do. I have the good wishes of the neighbours, and indeed of the whole parish, let the thing go as it may."

"I know that, Dominick, and for the same rason we'll have a collection at the three althars. I'll mintion it to them after Mass to-morrow, and let them be prepared for Sunday week, when we can make the collection. Hut, man, never fear; we'll get as much as will send him halfway to the priesthood; and I'll tell you what, Dominick, I'll never be the man to refuse giving him a couple of guineas myself."

"May the heavenly Father bless an' keep your Reverence. I'm sure 'tis a good right the boy has, as well as all of us, to never forget your kindness. But as to the money—he'll be proud of your assistance the other way, Sir—so not a penny—'tis only your good-will we want—hem—except indeed, that you'd wish yourself to make a piece of kindness of it to the poor boy. Oh, not a drop more, Sir—I declare it'll be apt to get into my head. Well, well—sure an' we're not to disobey our clargy, whether or not: so here's your health over agin, your Reverence! an' success to the poor child that's bint on good!"

"Two guineas his Reverence is to give you from himself, Jimmy," said the father, on relating the success of this interview with the priest; "an' faix I was widin one of refusin' it, for feard it might bring something *unlucky*[20] wid it; but, thought I, on the spur, it's best to take it, any way. We can asily put it off on some o' these black-mouthed Presbyterians or Orangemen, by way of changin' it, an' if there's any hard fortune in it, let them have the full benefit of it, *ershi misha.*"[21]

It is by trifles of this nature that the unreasonable though enduring hatred with which the religious sects of Ireland look upon those of a different creed is best known. This feeling, however, is sufficiently mutual. Yet on both sides there is something more speculative than practical in its nature. When they speak of each other as a distinct class, the animosity, though abstracted, appears to be most deep; but

when they mingle in the necessary intercourse of life, it is curious to see them frequently descend, on both sides, from the general rule to those exceptions of good-will and kindness, which natural benevolence and mutual obligation, together with a correct knowledge of each other's real characters, frequently produce. Even this abstracted hatred, however, has been the curse of our unhappy country; it has kept us too much asunder, or when we met, exhibited us to each other in our darkest and most offensive aspects.

Dominick's conduct in the matter of the priest's money was also a happy illustration of that mixture of simplicity and shrewdness with which an Irishman can frequently make points meet, which superstition, alone, without such ingenuity, would keep separate for ever. Many another man might have refused the money from an ignorant dread of its proving *unlucky;* but his mode of reasoning on the subject was satisfactory to himself, and certainly the most ingenious which, according to his belief, he could have adopted,—that of foisting it upon a heretic.

The eloquence of a country priest, though rude, and by no means elevated, is sometimes well adapted to the end in view, to the feelings of his auditory, and to the nature of the subject on which he speaks. Pathos and humour are the two levers by which the Irish character is raised or depressed; and these are blended in a manner too anomalous to be ever properly described. Whoever could be present at a sermon on the Sunday when a Purgatorian Society is

to be established, would hear pathos and see grief of the first water. It is then he would get a "nate" and glowing description of Purgatory, and see the broad, humorous, Milesian faces, of three or four thousand persons of both sexes, shaped into an expression of the most grotesque and clamorous grief. The priest, however, on particular occasions of this nature, very shrewdly gives notice of the sermon, and of the purpose for which it is to be preached:—if it be grave, the people are prepared to cry; but if it be for a political, or any other purpose not decidedly religious, there will be abundance of that rough, blunt satire and mirth, so keenly relished by the peasantry, illustrated, too, by the most comical and ridiculous allusions. That priest, indeed, who is the best master of this latter faculty is uniformly the greatest favourite. It is no unfrequent thing to see the majority of an Irish congregation drowned in sorrow and tears, even when they are utterly ignorant of the language spoken; particularly in those districts where the Irish is still the vernacular tongue. This is what renders notice of the sermon and its purport necessary; otherwise the honest people might be seriously at a loss whether to laugh or cry.

"*Ellish, avourneen, gho dhe dirsha?*"—"Ellish, my dear, what is he saying?"

"*Och, musha niel eshighum, ahagur—ta sha er Purgathor, ta barlhum.*"—"Och, I dunna that, jewel; I blieve he's on Purgatory."

"*Och, och, oh—och, och, oh—oh, i, oh, i, oh!*"

And on understanding that Purgatory is the

subject, they commence their grief with a rocking motion, wringing their hands, and unconsciously passing their beads through their fingers, whilst their bodies are bent forward towards the earth.

On the contrary, when the priest gets jocular —which I should have premised, he never does in what is announced as a solemn sermon—you might observe several faces charged with mirth and laughter, turned, even while beaming with this expression, to those who kneel beside them, inquiring:

"Arrah, Barny, what is it—ha, ha, ha!—what is it he's sayin'? The Lord spare him among us, any how, the darlin' of a man! Eh, Barny, you that's in the inside the English?" This, of course, is spoken in Irish.

Barny, however, is generally too much absorbed in the fun to become interpreter just then; but as soon as the joke is nearly heard out, in compliance with the importunity of his neighbours, he gives them a brief hint or two, and instantly the full chorus is rung out, long, loud, and jocular.

On the Sunday in question, as the subject could not be called strictly religious, the priest, who knew that a joke or two would bring in many an additional crown to Jemmy's *caubeen*,[22] was determined that they should at least have a laugh for their money. The man, besides, was benevolent, and knew the way to the Irish heart; a knowledge which he felt happy in turning to the benefit of the lad in question.

With this object in view, he addressed the people somewhat in the following language:

"*Blessed is he that giveth his money to him that standeth in need of it.*

"These words, my brethren, are taken from St. Paul, who, among ourselves, knew the value of a friend in distress as well as any other apostle in the three kingdoms—hem. It's a nate text, my friends, any how. He manes, however, when we have it to give, my own true, well-tried, ould friends!—when we have it to give. Its absence althers the case, in toto; because you have all heard the proverb—'there is no takin' money out of an empty purse;' or, as an ould ancient author said long ago upon the same subject:

'Cantabit whackuus coram lathrone whitathur!'

—(Dshk, dshk, dshk[28]—that's the larnin'!)—He that carries an empty purse may fwhistle at the thief. It's *sing* in the Latin; but sing or fwhistle, in my opinion, he that goes wid an empty purse seldom sings or fwhistles to a pleasant tune. Melancholy music I'd call it, an' wouldn't, may be, much astray afther.—Hem. At all evints, may none of this present congregation, whin at their devotions, ever sing or fwhistle to the same tune! No; let it be to 'money in both pockets,' if you sing at all; and as long as you have that, never fear but you'll also have the 'priest in his boots' into the bargain—("Ha, ha, ha!—God bless him, isn't he the pleasant gentleman, all out—ha, ha, ha!—moreover, an' by the same a token, it's thrue as

Gospel, so it is,")—for well I know that you're the high-spirited people, who wouldn't see your priest without them, while a fat parson, with half-a-dozen chins upon him, red and rosy, goes about every day in the week bogged in boots, like a horse-trooper!—(Ha, ha, ha!—good, Father Dan! More power to you—ha, ha, ha! We're the boys that wouldn't see you in want o' them, sure enough. Isn't he the droll crathur?").

"But suppose a man hasn't money, what is he to do? Now this divides itself into what is called Hydrostatics an' Metaphuysics, and must be proved logically in the following manner:

"First, we suppose him *not* to have the money—there I may be wrong or I may be right; now for the illustration and the logic.

"Pether Donovan."

"Here, your Reverence."

"Now, Pether, if I suppose you to have *no* money, am I right, or am I wrong?"

"Why, thin, I'd be sarry to prove your Reverence to be wrong, so I would; but, for all that, I believe I must give it aginst you."

"How much have you got, Pether?"

"Ethen, but 'tis yer Reverence that's comin' close upon me; two or three small notes an' some silver."

"How much silver, Pether?"

"I'll tell your Reverence in a jiffy. I ought to have a ten shillin', barrin' the price of a quarther o' tobaccy that I bought at the crass-roads beyant. Nine shillins an' some hapuns, yer Reverence."

"Very good, Pether, you must hand me the silver, till I give the rest of the illustration wid it."

"But does yer Reverence mind another ould proverb?—'a fool an' his money's asy parted.' Sure an' I know you're goin' to do a joke upon me."

("Give him the money, Pether," from a hundred voices—"give his Reverence the money, you nager you—give him the silver, you dirty spalpeen you—hand it out, you misert.")

"Pether, if you don't give it dacently, I'll not take it; and in that case—"

"Here, here, your Reverence—here it is; sure I wouldn't have your ill-will for all I'm worth."

"Why, you nager, if I wasn't the first orathor livin', barrin' Cicero or Demosthenes himself, I couldn't *schrew* a penny out o' you! Now, Pether, there's a specimen of logic for you; an' if it wasn't good, depind upon it the money would be in your pocket still. I've never known you to give a penny for any charitable purpose, since ever I saw your face: but I'm doin' a good action in your behalf for once; so if you have any movin' words to say to the money in question, say them, for you'll never finger it more."

A burst of the most uproarious mirth followed this manœuvre, in which the simple priest himself joined heartily; whilst the melancholy of Peter's face was ludicrously contrasted with the glee which characterised those that surrounded him.

"Hem!—Secondly—A man, you see, may have money, or he may not, when his fellow-crea-

ture who stands in need of it makes an appale to his dacency and his feelings; and sorry I'd be to think that there's a man before me, or a woman either, who'd refuse to assist the distresses of any one, of any creed, church, or persuasion, whether white, black, or yallow—no; I don't except even the bluebellies themselves. It's what I never taught you, nor never will tache you to the day of my death! To be sure, a fellow-creature may say, 'help me, my brother, I am distressed,' or, 'I am bent on a good purpose, that your kindness can enable me to accomplish.' But suppose that you have not the money *about you at the time,* wouldn't you feel sorry to the back-bone? Ay, would yez—to the very core of the heart itself. Or if any man—an' he'd be nothing else than a *bodagh* that would say it—if any man would tell me that you would not, I'd—yes—I'd give him his answer, as good as I gave to ould Cokely long ago, and you all know what that was.

"The next point is, what would you do if you hadn't it about you? It's I that can tell you what you'd do:—you'd say, 'I haven't got it, brother,'—for ev'ry created bein' of the human kind is your brother, barrin' the women, an' they are your sisters—[this produced a grin upon many faces]—'but,' says you, 'if you wait a bit for a day or two, or a week, or maybe for a fortnight, I'll try what I can do to help you.'

"Picture to yourselves a fellow-creature in distress—suppose him to have neither hat, shoe, nor stocking—[this was a touch of the pathetic]

—and altogether in a state of utter destitution! Can there be a more melancholy picture than this? No, there can't. But 'tisn't the tithe of it!—a barefaced robbery is the same tithe—think of him without father, mother, or friend upon the earth—both dead, and ne'er another to be had for love or money—maybe he has poor health—maybe he's sick, an' in a sthrange country—[here Jemmy's mother and friends sobbed aloud, and the contagion began to spread—the priest, in fact, knew where to touch]—his face is pale—his eyes sunk with sickness and sorrow in his head—his bones are cuttin' the skin—he knows not where to turn himself—hunger and sickness are strivin' for him.—[Here the grief became loud and general, and even the good-natured preacher's own voice got somewhat unsteady.]—He's in a bad state entirely—miserable! more miserable!! most miserable!!! [och, och, oh!] sick, sore, and sorry!—he's to be pitied, felt for, and compassionated!—[a general outcry]—'tis a faver he has, or an ague, maybe, or a rheumatism, or an embargo [24] on the limbs, or the king's evil, or a consumption, or a decline, or God knows but it's the falling-sickness—[och, och, oh!—och, och, oh! from the whole congregation, whilst the simple old man's eyes were blinded with tears at the force of the picture he drew.]—Ay, maybe it's the *falling*-sickness, and in that case how on earth can he *stand* it.—[He can't, he can't, wurra strew, wurra strew!—och, och, oh!—ogh, ogh, ogh!]—The Lord in heaven look down upon him—[amin, amin, this blessed an' holy Sunday

that's in it!—och, oh!]—pity him—[amin, amin! —och, och, an' amin'!]—with miseracordial feeling and benediction! He hasn't a rap in his company!—moneyless, friendless, houseless, an' homeless! Ay, my friends, you all have homes —but *he* has none! Thrust back by every hard-hearted spalpeen, and he, maybe, a better father's son than the Turk that refuses him! Look at your own childre, my friends! Bring the case home to yourselves! Suppose he was one of them—alone on the earth, and none to pity him in his sorrows! Your own childre, I say, in a strange land.—[Here the outcry became astounding; men, women, and children in one general uproar of grief.]—An' this may all be Jemmy M'Evoy's case, that's going in a week or two to Munster, as a poor scholar—may be his case, I say, except you befriend him, and show your *dacency* and your *feelings,* like Christians and Catholics; and for either dacency or kindness, I'd turn yez against any other congregation in the diocess, or in the kingdom—ay, or against Dublin itself, if it was convanient, or in the neighbourhood."

Now here was a *coup de main*—not a syllable mentioned about Jemmy M'Evoy, until he had melted them down, ready for the impression, which he accordingly made to his heart's content.

"Ay," he went on, "an' 'tis the parish of Ballysogarth that has the name, far and near, for *both,* and well they desarve it. You won't see the poor gorsoon go to a sthrange country with empty pockets. He's the son of an honest

man—one of yourselves; and although he's a poor man, you know 'twas *Yallow Sam* that made him so—that put him out of his comfortable farm and slipped a *black-mouth*[25] into it. You won't turn your backs on the son in regard of *that,* any way. As for Sam, let *him* pass; he'll not grind the poor nor truckle to the rich, when he gives up his stewardship in the kingdom come. Lave him to the friend of the poor—to his God; but the son of them that he oppressed, you will stand up for. He's going to Munster, to learn 'to go upon the Mission;' and, on Sunday next, there will be a collection made here, and at the other two althars for him; and, as your own characters are at stake, I trust it will be neither mane nor shabby. There will be Protestants here, I'll engage, and you must act dacently before them, if it was only to set them a good example. And now I'll tell yez a story that the mintion of the Protestants brings to my mind:—

"There was, you see, a Protestant man and a Catholic woman once married together. The man was a swearing, drinking, wicked rascal, and his wife the same: between them they were a blessed pair to be sure. She never bent her knee under a priest until she was on her death-bed; nor was he known ever to enter a church door, or to give a shilling in charity but once, that being as follows:—He was passing a Catholic place of worship one Sunday, on his way to fowl—for he had his dog and gun with him; 'twas beside a road, and many of the congregation were

kneeling out across the way. Just as he passed they were making a collection for a poor scholar —and surely they that love the larning desarve to be encouraged! Well, behold you, says one of them, 'will you remember the poor scholar,' says he, 'and put something in the hat? You don't know,' says he, 'but his prayers will be before you.'[26] 'True enough, maybe,' says the man, 'and there's a crown to him, for God's sake.' Well and good; the man died, and so did the wife: but the very day before her departure, she got a scapular, and died in it. She had one sister, however, a good crature, that did nothing but fast and pray, and make her sowl. This woman had strong doubts upon her mind, and was very much troubled as to whether or not her sister went to heaven; and she begged it as a favour from the blessed Virgin, that the state of her sister's sowl might be revaled to her. Her prayer was granted. One night, about a week after her death, her sister came back to her, dressed all in white, and circled round by a veil of glory.

"'Is that Mary?' said the living sister.

"'It is,' said the other; 'I have got the liberty to appear to you,' says she, 'and to tell you that I'm happy.'

"'May the holy Virgin be praised!' said the other. 'Mary, dear, you have taken a great weight off of me,' says she: 'I thought you'd have a bad chance, in regard of the life you led.'

"'When I died,' said the spirit, 'and was on my way to the other world, I came to a place

where the road divided itself into three parts;—one to heaven, another to hell, and a third to purgatory. There was a dark gulf between me and heaven, and a breach between me and purgatory that I couldn't step across, and if I had missed my foot there, I would have dropped into hell. So I would, too, only that the blessed Virgin put my own scapular over the breach, and it became firm, and I stepped on it, and got over. The Virgin then desired me to look into hell, and the first person I saw was my own husband, standing with a green sod under his feet! "He got that favour," said the blessed Virgin, "in consequence of the prayers of a holy priest, that had once been a poor scholar, that he gave assistance to, at a collection made for him in such a chapel," says she. Then,' continued the sowl, 'Mary,' says she, 'but there's some great change in the world since I died, or why would the people live so long? It can't be less than six thousand years since I departed, and yet I find every one of my friends just as I left them.'

"'Why,' replied the living sister, 'you're only six days dead.'

"'Ah, avourneen!' said the other, 'it can't be—it can't be! for I have been thousands on thousands of years in pain!'—and as she spoke this she disappeared.

"Now there's a *proof* of the pains of purgatory, where one day seems as long as a thousand years; and you know we oughtn't to grudge a thrifle to a fellow-crature, that *we* may avoid it. So you see, my friends, there's nothing like good

works. You know not when or where this lad's prayers may benefit you. If he gets ordained, the first mass he says will be for his benefactors; and in every one he celebrates after that, they must also be remembered: the words are—*pro omnibus benefactoribus meis, per omnia secula seculorum!*

"Thirdly—hem—I now lave the thing to yourselves.

"But wasn't I a match for Pether Donovan, that would brake a stone for the marrow [27]—Eh? —(a broad laugh at Pether's rueful visage.)—Pether, you Turk, will your heart never soften—will you never have dacency, an' you the only man of your family that's so? Sure they say you're going to be marrid some of these days. Well, if you get your wife in my parish, I tell you, Pether, I'll give you a fleecin', for don't think I'll marry you as chape as I would a poor honest man. I'll make you shell out the yallow-boys, and 'tis that will go to your heart, you nager you; and then I'll eat you out of house and home at the Stations. May the Lord grant us, in the mane time, a dacent appetite, a blessing which I wish you all,——&c."

At this moment the congregation was once more in convulsions of laughter at the dressing which Peter, whose character was drawn with much truth and humour, received at the hands of the worthy pastor.

Our readers will perceive that there was not a single prejudice, or weakness, or virtue, in the disposition of his auditory, left untouched in this

address. He moved their superstition, their pride of character, their dread of hell and purgatory, their detestation of Yellow Sam, and the remembrance of the injury so wantonly inflicted on M'Evoy's family; he glanced at the advantage to be derived from the lad's prayers, the example they should set to Protestants, made a passing hit at tithes; and indulged in the humorous, the pathetic, and the miraculous. In short, he left no avenue to their hearts untouched; and in the process by which he attempted to accomplish his object he was successful.

There is, in fact, much rude, unpolished eloquence among the Roman Catholic priesthood, and not a little which, if duly cultivated by study and a more liberal education, would deserve to be ranked very high.

We do not give this as a specimen of their *modern* pulpit eloquence, but as a sample of that in which some of those Irish clergy shone, who, before the establishment of Maynooth, were admitted to orders immediately from the hedge-schools, in consequence of the dearth of priests which then existed in Ireland. It was customary in those days to ordain them even before they departed for the continental colleges, in order that they might, by saying masses and performing other clerical duties, be enabled to add something to the scanty pittance which was appropriated to their support. Of the class to which Father Kavanagh belonged, there are few, if any, remaining. They sometimes were called "Hedge-priests," [28] by way of reproach; though

for our own parts, we wish their non-interference in politics, unaffected piety, and simplicity of character, had remained behind them.

On the Sunday following, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy attended mass, whilst the other members of the family, with that sense of honest pride which is more strongly inherent in Irish character than is generally supposed, remained at home, from a reluctance to witness what they could not but consider a degradation. This decency of feeling was anticipated by the priest, and not overlooked by the people; for the former, the reader may have observed, in the whole course of his address never once mentioned the word "charity;" nor did the latter permit the circumstance to go without its reward, according to the best of their ability. So keen and delicate are the perceptions of the Irish, and so acutely alive are they to those nice distinctions of kindness and courtesy, which have in their hearts a spontaneous and sturdy growth, that mocks at the stunted virtues of artificial life.

In the parish of Ballysogarth there were three altars, or places of Roman Catholic worship; and the reader may suppose that the collection made at each place was considerable. In truth, both father and son's anticipations were far under the sum collected. Protestants and Presbyterians attended with their contributions, and those of the latter who scrupled to be present at what they considered to be an idolatrous worship, did not hesitate to *send* their quota by some Roman Catholic neighbour.

Their names were accordingly announced with an encomium from the priest, which never failed to excite a warm-hearted murmur of approbation. Nor was this feeling transient, for, we will venture to say, that had political excitement flamed up even to rebellion and mutual slaughter, the persons and property of *those* individuals would have been held sacred.

At length Jemmy was equipped; and sad and heavy became the hearts of his parents and immediate relations as the morning appointed for his departure drew nigh. On the evening before, several of his more distant relatives came to take their farewell of him, and, in compliance with the usages of Irish hospitality, they were detained for the night. They did not, however, come empty-handed: some brought money; some brought linen, stockings, or small presents—"jist, Jimmy asthore, to keep *me* in yer memory, sure,—and nothin' else it is for, mavourneen."

Except Jemmy himself, and one of his brothers who was to accompany him part of the way, none of the family slept. The mother exhibited deep sorrow, and Dominick, although he made a show of firmness, felt, now that the crisis was at hand, nearly incapable of parting with the boy. The conversation of their friends and the cheering effects of the poteen, enabled them to sustain his loss better than they otherwise would have done, and the hope of seeing him one day "an ordained priest," contributed more than either to support them.

When the night was nearly half spent, the mother took a candle and privately withdrew to the room in which the boy slept. The youth was fair, and interesting to look upon—the clustering locks of his white forehead were divided; yet there was on his otherwise open brow, a shade of sorrow, produced by the coming separation, which even sleep could not efface. The mother held the candle gently towards his face, shading it with one hand, lest the light might suddenly awake him; she then surveyed his features long and affectionately, whilst the tears fell in showers from her cheeks.

"There you lie," she softly sobbed out, in Irish, "the sweet pulse of your mother's heart; the flower of our flock, the pride of our eyes, and the music of our hearth! Jimmy, avourneen machree, an' how can I part wid you, my darlin' son! Sure, when I look at your mild face, and think that you're takin' the world on your head to *rise* us out of our poverty, isn't my heart brakin'! A lonely house we'll have afther you, acushla! Goin' out and comin' in, at home or abroad, your voice won't be in my ears, nor your eye smilin' upon me; An' thin to think of what you may suffer in a sthrange land! If your head aches, on what tendher breast will it lie? or who will bind the ribbon of comfort[29] round it? or wipe your fair mild brow in sickness? Oh, Blessed Mother!—hunger, sickness, and sorrow may come upon you *when you'll be far from your own, an' from them that loves you!*"

This melancholy picture was too much for the tenderness of the mother; she sat down beside the bed, rested her face on her open hand, and wept in subdued but bitter grief. At this moment his father, who probably suspected the cause of her absence, came in and perceived her distress.

"Vara," said he, in Irish also, "is my darlin' son asleep?"

She looked up, with streaming eyes, as he spoke, and replied to him in a manner so exquisitely affecting, when the circumstances of the boy, and the tender allusion made by the sorrowing mother, are considered—that in point of fact no heart—certainly no Irish heart—could withstand it. There is an old Irish melody unsurpassed in pathos, simplicity and beauty—named in Irish "Tha ma machulla 'sna foscal me,"—or in English, "I am asleep, and don't waken me." The position of the boy caused the recollection of the old melody to flash into the mother's heart, —she simply pointed to him as the words streamed in a low melodious murmur, but one full of heartrending sorrow, from her lips. The old sacred association—for it was one which she had sung for him a thousand times,—until warned to desist by his tears—deepened the tenderness of her heart, and she said with difficulty, whilst she involuntarily held over the candle to gratify the father's heart by a sight of him.

"I was keepin' him before my eye," she said; "God knows but it may be the last night we'll ever see him undher our own roof! Dominick,

achora, I doubt I can't part wid him from my heart."

"Then how can I, Vara?" he replied. "Wasn't he my right hand in everything? When was he from me, ever since he took a man's work upon him? And when he'd finish his own task for the day, how kindly he'd begin an' help me wid mine! No, Vara, it goes to my heart to let him go away upon sich a plan, and I wish he hadn't taken the notion into his head at all."

"It's not too late, maybe," replied his mother: "I think it wouldn't be hard to put him off of it; the crathur's own heart is failin' him to lave us. He has sorrow upon his face where he lies."

The father looked at the expression of affectionate melancholy which shaded his features as he slept; and the perception of the boy's internal struggle against his own domestic attachments in acomplishing his first determination, powerfully touched his heart.

"Vara," said he, "I know the boy—he won't give it up; and 'twould be a pity—maybe a sin—to put him from it. Let the child get fair play, and thry his coorse. If he fails, he can come back to us, an' our arms an' hearts will be open to welcome him! But, if God prospers him, wouldn't it be a blessin' that we never expected, to see him in the white robes, celebratin' one mass for his paarents. If these ould eyes could see that, I would be contínted to close them in pace an' happiness for ever."

"An' well you'd become them, avourneen machree! Well would your mild and handsome

countenance look wid the long heavenly stole of innocence upon you! and although it's atin' into my heart, I'll bear it for the sake of seein' the same blessed sight. Look at that face, Dominick; mightn't many a lord of the land be proud to have sich a son? May the heavens shower down its blessin' upon him!"

The father burst into tears. "It is—it is!" said he. "It is the face that 'ud make many a noble heart proud to look at it! Is it any wondher it 'ud cut *our* hearts, thin, to have it taken from afore our eyes? Come away, Vara, come away, or I'll not be able to part wid it. It *is* the lovely face—an' kind is the heart of my darlin' child!" As he spoke, he stooped down and kissed the youth's cheek, on which the warm tears of affection fell, soft as the dew from heaven. The mother followed his example, and they both left the room.

"We must bear it," said Dominick, as they passed into another apartment; "the money's gathered, an' it wouldn't look well to be goin' back wid it to them that befrinded us. *We'd* have the blush upon our face for it, an' the child no advantage."

"Thrue for you, Dominick; and we must make up our minds to live widout him for a while."

The following morning was dark and cloudy, but calm and without rain. When the family were all assembled, every member of it evinced traces of deep feeling, and every eye was fixed upon the serene but melancholy countenance of the boy with tenderness and sorrow. He himself

maintained a quiet equanimity, which, though apparently liable to be broken by the struggles of domestic affection, and in character with his meek and unassuming disposition, yet was supported by more firmness than might be expected from a mind in which kindness and sensibility were so strongly predominant. At this time, however, his character was not developed, or at least not understood, by those that surrounded him. To strong feelings and enduring affections, he added a keenness of perception and a bitterness of invective, of which, in his conversation with his father concerning Yellow Sam, the reader has already had sufficient proofs. At breakfast little or nothing was eaten; the boy himself could not taste a morsel, nor any other person in the family. When the form of the meal was over, the father knelt down—"It's right," said he, "that we should all go to our knees, and join in a Rosary in behalf of the child that's goin' on a good intintion. He won't thrive the worse bekase the last words that he'll hear from his father and mother's lips is a prayer for bringin' the blessin' of God down upon his endayvours."

This was accordingly performed, though not without tears and sobs, and frequent demonstrations of grief; for religion among the peasantry is often associated with bursts of deep and powerful feeling.

When the prayer was over, the boy rose and calmly strapped to his back a satchel covered with deer-skin, containing a few books, linen, and a

change of very plain apparel. While engaged in this, the uproar of grief in the house was perfectly heart-rending. When just ready to set out, he reverently took off his hat, knelt down, and with tears streaming from his eyes, craved humbly and meekly the blessing and forgiveness of his father and mother. The mother caught him in her arms, kissed his lips, and kneeling also, sobbed out a fervent benediction upon his head; the father now, in the grief of a strong man, pressed him to his heart, until the big burning tears fell upon the boy's face; his brothers and sisters embraced him wildly; next his more distant relations; and lastly, the neighbours who were crowded about the door. After this he took a light staff in his hand, and, first blessing himself after the form of his church, proceeded to a strange land in quest of education.

He had not gone more than a few perches from the door, when his mother followed him with a small bottle of holy water. "Jimmy, *a lanna voght,*"[80] said she, "here's this, an' carry it about you—it will keep evil from you; an' be sure to take good care of the written correckther you got from the priest an' Square Benson; an', darlin', don't be lookin' too often at the cuff o' your coat, for feard the people might get a notion that you have the bank-notes sewed in it. An', Jimmy agra, don't be too lavish upon their Munster crame, they say it's apt to give people the ague. Kiss me agin, agra; an' the heavens above keep you safe and well till we see you once more!"

She then tenderly, and still with melancholy

pride, settled his shirt collar, which she thought did not sit well about his neck: and kissing him again, with renewed sorrow left him to pursue his journey.

M'Evoy's house was situated on the side of a dark hill—one of that barren description which can be called neither inland nor mountain. It commanded a wide and extended prospect, and the road along which the lad travelled was visible for a considerable distance from it. On a small hillock before the door, sat Dominick and his wife, who, as long as their son was visible, kept their eyes, which were nearly blinded with tears, rivetted upon his person. It was now they gave full vent to their grief, and discussed with painful and melancholy satisfaction, all the excellent qualities which he possessed. As James himself advanced, one neighbour after another fell away from the train which accompanied him, not, however, until they had affectionately embraced and bid him adieu, and, perhaps, slipped with peculiar delicacy an additional mite into his waistcoat pocket. After the neighbours, then followed the gradual separation from his friends —one by one left him, as in the great journey of life, and in a few hours he found himself accompanied only by his favourite brother.

This to him was the greatest trial he had yet felt; long and heart-rending was their embrace. Jemmy soothed and comforted his beloved brother, but in vain. The lad threw himself on the spot at which they parted, and remained there until Jemmy turned an angle of the road which

brought him out of his sight, when the poor boy kissed the marks of his brother's feet repeatedly, and then returned home, hoarse and broken down with the violence of his grief.

He was now alone, and for the first time, felt keenly the strange object on which he was bent, together with all the difficulties connected with its attainment. He was young and uneducated, and many years, he knew, must elapse e'er he could find himself in possession of his wishes. But time would pass at home, as well as abroad, he thought; and as there lay no impediment of peculiar difficulty in his way, he collected all his firmness and proceeded.

There is no country on the earth in which either education, or the desire to procure it, is so much reverenced as in Ireland. Next to the claims of the priest and schoolmaster come those of the poor scholar for the respect of the people. It matters not how poor or how miserable he may be; so long as they see him struggling with poverty in the prosecution of a purpose so laudable, they will treat him with attention and kindness. Here there is no danger of his being sent to the workhouse, committed as a vagrant—or passed from parish to parish, until he reaches his own settlement. Here the humble lad is not met by the sneer of purse-proud insolence, or his simple tale answered only by the frown of heartless contempt. No—no—no. The best bit and sup are placed before him; and whilst his poor, but warm-hearted entertainer can afford only potatoes and salt to his own half-starved family, he will make

a struggle to procure something better for the poor scholar; "*Bekase he's far from his own, the crathur!* An' sure the intintion in him is good, any how; the Lord prosper him, an' every one that has the heart set upon the larnin'!"

As Jemmy proceeded, he found that his satchel of books and apparel gave as clear an intimation of his purpose, as if he had carried a label to that effect upon his back.

"God save you, a bouchal!" said a warm, honest-looking countryman, whom he met driving home his cows in the evening, within a few miles of the town in which he purposed to sleep.

"God save you kindly!"

"Why, thin, 'tis a long journey you have before you, alanna, for I know well it's for Munster you're bound."

"Thrue for you, 'tis there wid the help of God I'm goin'. A great scarcity of larnin' was in my own place, or I wouldn't have to go at all," said the boy, whilst his eyes filled with tears.

"'Tis no discredit in life," replied the countryman, with untaught natural delicacy, for he perceived that a sense of pride lingered about the boy, which made the character of poor scholar sit painfully upon him; "'tis no discredit, dear, nor don't be cast down. I'll warrant you that God will prosper you; an' that he may, avick, I pray this day!" and as he spoke, he raised his hat in reverence to the Being whom he invoked. "An' tell me, dear—where do you intend to sleep to-night?"

"In the town forrid here," replied Jemmy.

"I'm in hopes I'll be able to reach it before dark."

"Pooh! asy you will. Have you any friends or acquaintances there that 'ud welcome you, *a bouchal dhas* (my handsome boy)?"

"No, indeed," said Jemmy, "they're all strangers to me; but I can stop in 'dhry lodgin',' for it's chaper."

"Well, alanna, I believe you; but *I'm no stranger to you*—so come home wid me to-night; where you'll get a good bed, an betther thratement nor in any of their dhry lodgins. Give me your books, an' I'll carry them for you. Ethen, but you have a great batch o' them entirely. Can you make any hand o' the Latin at all yet?"

"No, indeed," replied Jemmy, somewhat sorrowfully; "I didn't ever open a Latin book, at all at all."

"Well, acushla, everything has a beginnin';—you won't be so. An' I know by your face that you'll be bright at it, an' a credit to them that owes [81] you. There's my house in the fields beyant, where you'll be well kept for one night, any way, or for twinty, or for ten times twinty, if you wanted them."

The honest farmer then commenced the song of *Colleen dhas Crotha na Mho*,[82] which he sang in a clear mellow voice, until they reached the house.

"Alley," said the man to his wife, on entering, "here's a stranger I've brought you."

"Well," replied Alley, "he's welcome sure,

any way; *Kead millia failta ghud,* alanna! sit over to the fire. Brian, get up, dear," said she to one of the children, "an' let the stranger to the hob."

"He's goin' on a good errand, the Lord bless him!" said the husband, "up the country for the larnin'. Put thim books over on the settle; an' whin the *girshas* are done milkin', give him a brave dhrink of the sweet milk; it's the stuff to thravel on."

"Throth, an' I will, wid a heart an' a half, wishin' it was betther I had to give him. Here, Nelly, put down a pot o' wather, an' lave soap an' a *praskeen,* afore you go to milk, till I bathe the dacent boy's feet. Sore an' tired they are afther his journey, poor young crathur."

When Jemmy placed himself upon the hob, he saw that some peculiarly good fortune had conducted him to so comfortable a resting-place. He considered this as a good omen, and felt, in fact, much relieved, for the sense of loneliness among strangers was removed.

The house evidently belonged to a wealthy farmer, well to do in the world; the chimney was studded with sides upon sides of yellow smoke-dried bacon, hams, and hung beef in abundance. The kitchen tables were large, and white as milk; and the dresser rich in its shining array of delf and pewter. Everything, in fact, was upon a large scale. Huge meal chests were ranged on one side, and two or three settle beds on the other, conspicuous, as I have said, for their uncommon cleanliness; whilst hung from the ceiling were the

glaiks, a machine for churning; and beside the dresser stood an immense churn, certainly too unwieldy to be managed except by machinery. The farmer was a ruddy-faced Milesian, who wore a drab frieze coat, with a velvet collar, buff waistcoat, corduroy small-clothes, and top-boots well greased from the tops down.[88] He was not only an agriculturist, but a grazier—remarkable for shrewdness and good sense, generally attended fairs and markets, and brought three or four large droves of fat cattle to England every year. From his fob hung the brass chain and almost rusty key of a watch, which he kept certainly more for use than ornament.

"A little sup o' this," said he, "won't take your life," approaching Jemmy with a bottle of as good poteen as ever escaped the eye of an exciseman; "it'll refresh you—for you're tired, or I wouldn't offer it, by rason that one bint on what you're bint on, oughtn't to be makin' freedoms wid the same dhrink. But there's a time for every thing, an' there's a time for this.——Thank you, agra," he added, in reply to Jemmy, who had drunk his health. "Now, don't be frettin'—but make yourself as aisy as if you were at your own father's hearth. You'll have everything to your heart's contint for this night; the carts are goin' in to the market to-morrow airly—you can sit upon them, an' maybe you'll get somethin' more nor you expect: sure the Lord has given it to me, an' why wouldn't I share it wid them that wants it more nor I do?"

The lad's heart yearned to the generous

farmer, for he felt that his kindness had the stamp of truth and sincerity upon it. He could only raise his eyes in a silent prayer, that none belonging to him might ever be compelled, as strangers and way-farers, to commit themselves, as he did, to the casualties of life, in pursuit of those attainments which poverty cannot otherwise command. Fervent, indeed, was his prayer; and certain we are, that because it was sincere, it must have been heard.

In the meantime, the good woman, or *vanithee,* had got the pot of water warmed, in which Jemmy was made to put his feet. She then stripped up her arms to the elbows, and, with soap and seedy meal, affectionately bathed his legs and feet: then, taking the praskeen, or coarse towel, she wiped them with a kindness which thrilled to his heart.

"And now," said she, "I must give you a cure for blisthers, an' it's this:—In the mornin', if we're all spared, as we will, plase the Almighty, I'll give you a needle an' some white woollen thread, well soaped. When your blisthers gets up, dhraw the soapy thread through them, clip it on each side, an', my life for yours, they won't throuble you. Sure I thried it the year I went on my Station to Lough Derg, an' I know it to be the rale cure."

"Here, Nelly," said the farmer,—who sat with a placid benevolent face, smoking his pipe on the opposite hob—to one of the maids who came in from milking,—"bring up a noggin of that milk, we want it here: let it be none of your washy

foremilk, but the *strippins,* Nelly, that has the strinth in it. Up wid it here, a colleen."

"The never a one o' the man but's doatin' downright, so he is," observed the wife, "to go to fill the tired child's stomach wid plash. Can't you wait till he ates a thrifle o' somethin' stout, to keep life in him, afther his hard journey? Does your feet feel themselves cool an' asy now, a hagur?"

"Indeed," said Jemmy, "I'm almost as fresh as when I set out. 'Twas little thought I had, when I came away this mornin', that I'd meet wid so much friendship on my journey. I hope it's a sign that God's on my side in my undertakin'!"

"I hope so, avourneen—I hope so, an' it is, too," replied the farmer, taking the pipe out of his mouth, and mildly whiffing away the smoke, "an' God'll be always on your side, as long as your intentions are good. Now ate somethin'—you must want it by this; an' thin, when you rest yourself bravely, take a tass into a good featherbed, where you can sleep rings round you.[84] Who knows but you'll be able to say mass for me or some o' my family yit. God grant that, any way, avick!"

Poor James's heart was too full to eat much; he took, therefore, only a very slender portion of the refreshments set before him; but his hospitable entertainer had no notion of permitting him to use the free exercise of his discretion on this important point. When James put away the knife and fork, as an indication of his having

concluded the meal, the farmer and his wife turned about, both at the same moment, with a kind of astonishment—

"Eh? is it givin' over that way you are? Why, a lanna, it's nothin' at all you've tuck; sure little Brian there would make a fool of you, so he would, at the atin'. Come, come, a bouchal—don't be ashamed, or make any way sthrange at all, but ate hearty."

"I declare I *have* ate heartily, thank you," replied James; "oceans itself, so I did. I couldn't swally a bit more if the house was full."

"Arrah, Brian," said the wife, "cut him up more o' that hung beef, it's ashamed the crathur is! Take it, avick; don't we know the journey you had? Faix, if one o' the boys was out on a day's thravellin', you'd see how he'd handle himself."

"Indeed," said James, "I can't—if I could I would. Sure I would be no way backward at all, so I wouldn't."

"Throth, an' you can an' must," said the farmer: "the never a rise you'll rise, till you finish that"—putting over a complement out of all reasonable proportion with his age and size.

"There now's a small taste, an' you must finish it. To go to ate nothin' at all! Hut tut! by the tops o' my boots, you must put that clear an' clane out o' sight, or I'll go mad an' burn them."

The lad recommenced, and continued to eat as long as he could possibly hold out; at length he ceased:

"I can't go on," said he; "don't ax me: I can't indeed."

"Bad manners to the word I'll hear till you finish it: you know it's but a thrifle to spake of. Thry agin, avick, but take your time; you'll be able for it."

The poor lad's heart was engaged on other thoughts and other scenes; his home, and its beloved inmates—sorrow, and the gush of young affections, were ready to burst forth.

"I cannot ate," said he, and he looked imploringly on the farmer and his wife, whilst the tears started to his eyes—"don't ax me, for my heart's wid them I left behind me, that I may never see agin;" and he wept in a burst of grief which he could not restrain.

Neither the strength nor tenderness of the lad's affection was unappreciated by this excellent couple. In a moment the farmer's wife was also in tears; nor did her husband break the silence for some minutes.

"The Almighty pity an' strengthen him!" said the farmer's wife, "but he has the good an' the kind heart, an' would be a credit to any family.—Whisht, acushla machree—whisht, we won't ax you to ate—no indeed. It was out o' kindness we did it: don't be cast down aither; sure it isn't the ocean you're crossin'; but goin' from one county like to another. God 'ill guard an' take care o' you, so he will. Your intintion's good, an' he'll prosper it."

"He will, avick," said the farmer himself—"he will. Cheer up, my good boy! I know

thim that's larned an' creditable clargy this day, that went as you're goin'—ay, an' that ris an' helped their parents, an' put them above poverty an' distress; an' never fear, wid a blessin', but you'll do the same."

"That's what brings me at all," replied the boy, drying his tears; "if I was once able to take them out o' their distresses, I'd be happy: only I'm afeard the cares o' the world will break my father's heart before I have it in my power to assist him."

"No such thing, darlin'," said the good woman. "Sure his hopes out o' you, an' his love for you, will keep him up; an' you dunna but God may give him a blessin' too, avick."

"Mix another sup o' that for him," said the farmer: "he's low spirited, an' it's too strong to give him any more of it as it is. Childhre, where's the masther from us—eh? Why, thin, God help them, the crathurs—wasn't it *thoughtful*[35] o' them to lave the place while he was at his dinner, for fraid he'd be dashed—manin' them young crathurs, Alley. But can you tell us where the 'masther' is? Isn't this his night wid us? I know he tuck his dinner here."

"Ay did he; but it's up to Larry Murphy's he's gone, to thry his son in his book-keepin'. Mavrone, but he had time enough to put him well through it afore this, any way."

As she spoke, a short thickset man, with black twinkling eyes and ruddy cheeks entered. This personage was no other than the schoolmaster of that district, who circulated, like a newspaper,

from one farmer's house to another, in order to expound for his kind entertainers the news of the day, his own learning, and the very evident extent of their ignorance.

The moment he came in, the farmer and his wife rose with an air of much deference, and placed a chair for him exactly opposite the fire, leaving a respectful distance on each side, within which no illiterate mortal durst presume to sit.

"Misther Corcoran," said the farmer, presenting Jemmy's satchel, through which the shapes of the books were quite plain, "*thig in thu shinn?*"[36] and as he spoke he looked significantly at its owner.

"Ah!" replied the man of letters, "*thigum, thigum.*[37] God be wid the day when I carried the likes of it. 'Tis a badge of polite genius, that no boy need be ashamed of. So my young suckling of litherature, you're bound for Munster?—for that counthry where the swallows fly in conic sections—where the magpies and the turkeys confab in Latin, and the cows and bullocks will roar you Doric Greek—bo-a-o—clamo. What's your pathronymic?—*quo nomine gowdes, Domine doctissime?*"

The lad was silent; but the farmer's wife turned up the whites of her eyes with an expression of wonder and surprise at the erudition of the "masther."

"I persave you are as yet uninitiated into the elementary *principia* of the languages; well—the honour is still before you. What's your name?"

"James M'Evoy, sir."

Just now the farmer's family began to assemble round the spacious hearth; the young lads, whose instruction the worthy teacher claimed as his own peculiar task, came timidly forward, together with two or three pretty bashful girls with sweet flashing eyes, and countenances full of feeling and intelligence. Behind on the settles, half-a-dozen servants of both sexes sat in pairs—each boy placing himself beside his favourite girl. These *appeared* to be as strongly interested in the learned conversation which the master held, as if they were masters and mistresses of Munster Latin and Doric Greek themselves; but an occasional thump cautiously bestowed by no slender female hand upon the sturdy shoulder of her companion, or a dry cough from one of the young men, fabricated to drown the coming blow, gave slight indications that they contrived to have a little amusement among themselves, altogether independent of Mr. Corcoran's erudition.

When the latter came in, Jemmy was taking the tumbler of punch which the farmer's wife had mixed for him; on this he fixed an expressive glance, which instantly reverted to the *vanithee,* and from her to the large bottle which stood in a window to the right of the fire. It is a quick eye, however, that can anticipate Irish hospitality.

"Alley," said the farmer, ere the wife had time to comply with the hint conveyed by the black, twinkling eye of the schoolmaster; "why, Alley"—

"Sure, I am," she replied, "an' will have it for you in less than no time."

She accordingly addressed herself to the bottle, and in a few minutes handed a reeking jug of punch to the *Farithee,* or good man.

"Come, Masther, by the hand o' my body, I don't like dhry talk so long as I can get anything to moisten the discoorse. Here's your health, Masther," continued the farmer, winking at the rest, "and a speedy conclusion to what you know! In throth, she's the pick of a good girl—not to mintion what she has for her portion. I'm a frind to the same family, an' will put a spoke in your wheel, Masther, that'll sarve you."

"Oh, Mr. Lanigan, very well, sir—very well—you're becoming quite facetious upon me," said the little man, rather confused; "but upon my credit and reputation, except the amorous inclination in regard to me is on *her* side," and he looked sheepishly at his hands, "I can't say that the arrows of Cupid have as yet pinethrated the sintimintal side of *my* heart. It is not with me as it was wid Dido—hem—

Non 'hæret lateri lethalis arundo,'

as Virgil says. Yet I can't say, but if a friend were to become spokesman for me, and insinuate in my behalf a small taste of amorous sintimintality, why—hem, hem, hem! The company's health! Lad, James M'Evoy, *your* health, and success to you, my good boy!—hem, hem!"

"Here's wishin' him the same!" said the farmer.

"James," said the schoolmaster, "you are goin' to Munsther, an' I can say that I have travelled it from end to end, not to a bad purpose, I hope—hem! Well, a bouchal, there are hard days and nights before you, so keep a firm heart. If you have money, as 'tis likely you have, don't let a single rap of it into the hands of the schoolmaster, although the first thing he'll do will be to bring you home to his own house, an' palaver you night an' day, till he succeeds in persuading you to leave it in his hands for security. You might, if not duly pre-admonished, surrender it to his solicitations, for—

'Nemo mortalium omnibus haris sapit.'

Michael, what case is *mortalium?*" added he, suddenly addressing one of the farmer's sons: "come, now, Michael, where's your brightness? What case is *mortalium?*"

The boy was taken by surprise, and for a few minutes could not reply.

"Come man," said the father, "be sharp, spake out bravely, an' don't be afeard; nor don't be in a hurry aither, we'll wait for you."

"Let him alone—let him alone," said Corcoran; "I'll face the same boy agin the county for *cuteness*. If he doesn't expound that, I'll never consthre a line of Latin, or Greek, or Masoretic, while I'm livin'."

His cunning master knew right well that the boy, who was only confused at the suddenness of the question, would feel no difficulty in answering it to his satisfaction. Indeed, it was

impossible for him to miss it, as he was then reading the seventh book of Virgil, and the fourth of Homer. It is, however, a trick with such masters to put simple questions of that nature to their pupils, when at the houses of their parents, as knotty and difficult, and when they are answered, to assume an air of astonishment at the profound reach of thought displayed by the pupil.

When Michael recovered himself, he instantly replied, "*Mortalium* is the ginitive case of *nemo*, by '*Nomina Partitiva*.'"

Corcoran laid down the tumbler, which he was in the act of raising to his lips, and looked at the lad with an air of surprise and delight, then at the farmer and his wife, alternately, and shook his head with much mystery. "Michael," said he to the lad, "will you go out, and tell us what the night's doin'."

The boy accordingly went out—"Why," said Corcoran, in his absence, "if ever there was a phanix, and that boy will be the bird—an Irish phanix he will be, a

Rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno!

There's no batin' him at anything he undhertakes. Why, there's thim that are makin' good bread by their larnin', that couldn't resolve that; and you all saw how he did it widout the book! Why, if he goes on at this rate, I'm afraid he'll soon be too many for myself—hem!"

"Too many for yourself! Fill the masther's tumbler, Alley. Too many for yourself! No,

no! I doubt he'll never see that day, bright as he is, an' cute. That's it—put a hape upon it. Give me your hand, masther. I thank you for your attintion to him, an' the boy *is* a credit to us. Come over, Michael, avourneen. Here, take what's in this tumbler, an' finish it. Be a good boy, an' mind your lessons, an' do everything the masther here—the Lord bless him!—bids you; an' you'll never want a frind, masther, nor a dinner, nor a bed, nor a guinea, while the Lord spares me aither the one or the other."

"I know it, Mr. Lanigan, I know it; and I will make that boy the pride of Ireland, if I'm spared. I'll show him *cramboes* that would puzzle the great Scaliger himself; and many other difficulties I'll let him into, that I have never let out yet, except to Tim Kearney, that bate them all at Thrinity College in Dublin up, last June."

"Arrah, how was that, Masther?"

"Tim, you see, went in to his Entrance Examinayshuns, and one of the Fellows came to examine him, but divil a long it was till Tim sacked him.

"'Go back agin,' says Tim, 'and sind some one that's *able* to tache me, for you're *not*.'

"So another greater scholar agin came to thry Tim, and *did* thry him, and Tim made a hare of *him*, before all that was in the place—five or six thousand ladies and gintlemen, at laste!

"The great learned Fellows thin began to look odd enough; so they picked out the best scholar among them but one, and slipped him at Tim:

Innisfallen, Killarney
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[illegible], Killarney
[illegible] from an original Photograph

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but well becomes Tim, the never a long it was till he had *him,* too, as dumb as a post. The fellow went back—

"'Gintlemen,' says he to the rest, 'we'll be disgraced all out,' says he, 'for except the Prowost sacks that Munsther spalpeen, he'll bate us all, an' we'll never be able to hould up our heads afther.'

"Accordingly, the Prowost attacks Tim; and such a meetin' as they had, never was seen in Thrinity College since its establishment. At last when they had been nine hours and a half at it, the Prowost put one word to him that Tim couldn't expound, so he lost it by *one* word only. For the last two hours the Prowost carried an the examinashun in Hebrew, thinking, you see, he *had* Tim there; but he was mistaken, for Tim answered him in good Munsther Irish, and it so happened that they understood each other, for the two languages are first cousins, or, at all evints, close blood relations. Tim was then pronounced to be the best scholar in Ireland except the Prowost; though among ourselves, they might have thought of the man that *taught* him. That, however, wasn't all. A young lady fell in love wid Tim, and is to make him a present of herself and her great fortune (three estates) the moment he becomes a counsellor; and in the meantime she allows him thirty pounds a year to bear his expenses, and live like a gintleman.

"Now to return to the youth in the corner: *Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit.* Jemmy, keep your money, or give it to the priest to

keep, and it will be safest; but by no means let the Hyblean honey of the schoolmaster's blarney deprive you of it, otherwise it will be a *vale, vale, longum vale* between you. *Crede experto!*"

"Masther," said the farmer, "many a strange accident you met wid on yer thravels through Munsther?"

"No doubt of that, Mr. Lanigan. I and another boy thravelled it in society together. One day we were walking towards a gintleman's house on the road side, and it happened that we met the owner of it in the vicinity, although we didn't know him to be such.

"'*Salvete, Domini!*' said he, in good fresh Latin.

"'*Tu sis salvus, quoque!*' said I to him, for my comrade wasn't cute, an' I was always orathor.

"'*Unde venitis?*' said he, comin' over us wid another deep piece of larnin', the construction of which was, 'where do yez come from?'

"I replied, '*Per varios casus et tot discrimina rerum, venimus a Mayo.*'

"'Good!' said he, 'you're bright; follow me.'

"So he brought us over to his own house, and ordered us bread and cheese and a posset; for it was Friday, an' we couldn't touch mate. He, in the mane time, sat an' chatted along wid us. The thievin' cook, however, in making the posset, kept the curds to herself, except a slight taste,

here and there, that floated on the top; but she was liberal enough of the whey, any how.

"Now I had been well trained to fishing in my more youthful days; and no gorsoon could grope a trout wid me. I accordingly sent the spoon through the pond before me wid the skill of a connoisseur; but to no purpose—it came up wid nothin' but the whey.

"So, said I off hand to the gintleman, houlding up the bowl, and looking at it with a disappointed face,

Apparent *rari* nantes in gurgite vasto.

'This,' says I, 'plase your hospitality, may be Pactolus, but the divil a taste o' the proper sand is in the bottom of it.'

"The wit of this, you see, pleased him, and we got an excellent treat in his *studium,* or study; for he was determined to give myself another trial.

"'What's the wickedest line in Virgil?' said he.

"Now I had Virgil at my fingers' ends, so I answered him:

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

"'Very good,' said he, 'you have the genius, and will come to somethin' yet: now tell me the most moral line in Virgil.'

"I answered:

'Discere justitiam moniti, et non temnere divos.' [88]

"'Depend upon it,' said he, 'you will be a

luminary. The morning-star will be but a farthing candle to you; and if you take in the learning as you do the cheese, in a short time there won't be a man in Munsther fit to teach you,' and he laughed, for you see he had a tendency to jocosity.

"He did not give me up here, however, being determined to go deeper wid me.

"'Can you translate a newspaper into Latin prose?' said he.

"Now the divil a one o' me was just then sure about the prose, so I was goin' to tell him; but before I had time to speak, he thrust the paper into my hand, and desired me to thranslate half-a-dozen barbarous advertisements.

"The first that met me was about a reward offered for a Newfoundland dog and a terrier, that had been stolen from a fishing-tackle manufacturer, and then came a list of his shabby merchandize, ending with a long-winded encomium upon his gunpowder, shot, and double-barrelled guns. Now, may I be shot wid a blank cartridge, if I ever felt so much at an amplush in my life, and I said so.

"'Your honour has hooked me wid the fishing-hooks,' said I; 'but I grant the cheese was good bait, any how.'

"So he laughed heartily, and bid me go on.

"Well, I thought the first was difficult; but the second was Masoretic to it—something about drawbacks, excisemen, and a long custom-house list, that would puzzle Publius Virgilius Maro, if he was set to translate it. However, I went

through wid it as well as I could; where I couldn't find Latin, I laid in the Greek, and where the Greek failed me, I gave the Irish, which, to tell the truth, in consequence of its vernacularity, I found to be the most convanient. Och, och, many a larned scrimmage I have signalised myself in, during my time. Sure my name's as common as a mail-coach in Thrinity College; and 'tis well known there isn't a Fellow in it but I could sack, except, may be, the Prowost. That's their own opinion. 'Corcoran,' says the Prowost, 'is the most larned man in Ireland; an' I'm not ashamed,' says he, 'to acknowledge that I'd rather decline meeting him upon deep points.' Ginteels, all your healths—hem! But among ourselves I could bog him in a very short time; though I'd scorn to deprive the gintleman of his reputaytion or his place, even if he sent me a challenge of larnin' to-morrow, although he's too cute to venture on doing *that*—hem, hem!"

To hear an obscure creature, whose name was but faintly known in the remote parts even of the parish in which he lived, draw the long-bow at such a rate, was highly amusing. The credulous character of his auditory, however, was no slight temptation to him; for he knew that next to the legends of their saints, or the Gospel itself, his fictions ranked in authenticity; and he was determined that it should not be his fault if their opinion of his learning and talents were not raised to the highest point.

The feeling experienced by the poor scholar,

when he awoke the next morning, was one both of satisfaction and sorrow. He thought once more of his home and kindred, and reflected that it might be possible he had seen the last of his beloved relations. His grief, however, was checked when he remembered the warm and paternal affection with which he was received on the preceding night by his hospitable countryman. He offered up his prayers to God; humbly besought his grace and protection; nor did he forget to implore a blessing upon those who had thus soothed his early sorrows, and afforded him, though a stranger and friendless, shelter, comfort, and sympathy.

"I hope," thought he, "that I will meet many such, till I overcome my difficulties, an' find myself able to assist my poor father an' mother!"

And he did meet many such among the humble and despised, and neglected of his countrymen; for—and we say it with pride—the character of this excellent farmer is thoroughly that of our peasantry within the range of domestic life.

When he had eaten a comfortable breakfast, and seen his satchel stuffed with provision for his journey, the farmer brought him up to his own room, in which were also his wife and children.

"God," said he, "has been good to me; blessed be his holy name!—betther it appears, in one sinse, than he has been to you, dear, though maybe I don't desarve it as well. But no matther, acushla; *I* have it, an' *you* want it; so here's a thrifle to help you forrid in your larnin';

an' all I ax from you is to offer up a bit of a prayer for me, of an odd time, an' if ever you live to be a priest, to say, if it wouldn't be throublesome, one Mass for me an' those that you see about me. It's not much, James agra—only two guineas. They may stand your friend, whin friends will be scarce wid you; though, I hope, that won't be the case aither."

The tears were already streaming down Jemmy's cheeks. "Oh," said the artless boy, "God for ever reward you! but sure I have a great dale of money in the—in the—cuff o' my coat. Indeed, I have, an' I won't want it!"

The farmer, affected by the utter simplicity of the lad, looked at his wife and smiled, although a tear stood in his eye at the time. She wiped her eyes with her apron, and backed the kind offer of her husband.

"Take it, asthore;" she added, "in your cuff! Musha, God help you! sure it's not much you or the likes of you can have in your cuff, avourneen! Don't be ashamed, but take it; we can well afford it, glory be to God for it! It's not, agra, bekase you're goin' the way you are—though that same's an honour to you—but bekase our hearts warmed to you, that we offered it, an' bekase we would wish you to be thinkin' of us now an' thin, when you're in a strange part of the country. Let me open your pocket an' put them into it. That's a good boy, thank you, an' God bless an' prosper you! I'm sure you wor always biddable."

"Now, childher," said the farmer, addressing

his sons and daughters, "never see the sthranger widout a frind, nor wantin' a bed or a dinner, when you grow up to be men an' women. There's many a turn in this world; we may be strangers ourselves; an' think of what I would feel if any of you was far from me, widout money or friends, when I'd hear that you met a father in a strange counthry that lightened your hearts by his kindness. Now, dear, the carts'll be ready in no time—eh? Why there they are at the gate waitin' for you. Get into one of them, an' they'll lave you in the next town. Come, man, bud-an' age, be stout-hearted, an' don't cry; sure we did nothin' for you to spake of."

He shook the poor scholar by the hand, and drawing his hat over his eyes, passed hurriedly out of the room. Alley stooped down, kissed his lips, and wept; and the children each embraced him with that mingled feeling of compassion and respect which is uniformly entertained for the poor scholar in Ireland.

The boy felt as if he had been again separated from his parents; with a sobbing bosom and wet cheeks he bid them farewell, and mounting one of the carts was soon beyond sight and hearing of the kind-hearted farmer and his family.

When the cart had proceeded about a mile, it stopped, and one of the men who accompanied it, addressing a boy who passed with two sods of turf under his arm, desired him to hurry on and inform his master that they waited for him.

"Tell Misther Corcoran to come into coort,"

said the man, laughing, "my Lordship's waitin' to hear his defince for intindin' *not* to run away wid Miss Judy Malowny. Tell him Lord *Carty's* ready to pass sintince on him for not stalin' the heart of her wid his Rule o' Three. Ha! by the holy farmer, you'll get it for stayin' from school to this hour. Be quick, abouchal!"

In a few minutes the trembling urchin, glad of any message that might serve to divert the dreaded birch from himself, entered the uproarious "Siminary," caught his forelock, bobbed down his head to the master, and pitched his "two sods" into a little heap of turf which lay in the corner of the school.

"Arrah, Pat Roach, is this an hour to inter into my establishment wid impunity? Eh, you Rosicrusian?"

"Masther, sir," replied the adroit monkey, "I've a message for you, sir, i' you plase."

"An' what might the message be, Masther Pat Roach? To dine to-day wid your worthy father, abouchal?"

"No, sir; it's from one o' Mr. Lanigan's boys—him that belongs to the carts, sir; he wants to spake to you, sir, i' you plase."

"An' do you give that by way of an apologetical oration for your absence from the advantages of my tuition until this hour? However, *non constat, Patrici;* I'll pluck the crow wid you on my return. If you don't find yourself a well-flogged youth for your 'mitchin',' never say that this right hand can administer condign punishment to that part of

your physical theory which constitutes the antithesis to your *vacuum caput. En et ecce,* you villain," he added, pointing to the birch, "it's newly cut and trimmed, and pregnant wid alacrity for the operation. I correct, Patricius, on fundamental principles, which you'll soon *feel* to your cost."

"Masther, sir," replied the lad, in a friendly, conciliating tone, "my fadher 'ud be oblaged to you, if you'd take share of a fat goose wid him to-morrow."

"Go to your sate, Paddy, avourneen; devil a dacent boy in the siminary I joke so much wid, as I do wid yourself; an' all out of respect for your worthy parents. Faith, I've a great regard for them, all out, an' tell them so."

He then proceeded to the carts, and approaching Jemmy, gave him such advice touching his conduct in Munster, as he considered to be most serviceable to an inexperienced lad of his years.

"Here," said the kind-hearted soul—"here, James, is my mite; it's but bare ten shillings; but if I could make it a pound for you, it would give me a degree of delectability which I have not enjoyed for a long time. The truth is, there's something like the *nodus matrimonii,* or what they facetiously term the priest's gallows, dangling over my head, so that any little thrifle I may get must be kept together for that crisis, James, abouchal; so that must be my apology for not giving you more, joined to the naked fact, that I never was remarkable for a superfluity of cash under any circumstances.

Remember what I told you last night. Don't let a shilling of your money into the hands of the masther you settle wid. Give it to the parish priest, and dhraw it from him when you want it. Don't join the parties or the factions of the school. Above all, spake ill of nobody; and if the masther is harsh upon you, either bear it patiently, or mintion it to the priest, or to some other person of respectability in the parish, and you'll be protected. You'll be apt to meet cruelty enough, my good boy; for there are larned Neros in Munster, who'd flog if the province was in flames.

"Now, James, I'll tell you what you'll do, when you reach the larned south. Plant yourself on the highest hill in the neighbourhood wherein the academician with whom you intend to stop, lives. Let the hour of reconnoitring be that in which dinner is preparing. When seated there, James, take a survey of the smoke that ascends from the chimnies of the farmers' houses, and be sure to direct your steps to that from which the highest and merriest column issues. This is the old plan, and it is a sure one. The highest smoke rises from the largest fire, the largest fire boils the biggest pot, the biggest pot generally holds the fattest bacon, and the fattest bacon is kept by the richest farmer. It's a wholesome and comfortable *climax,* my boy, and one by which I myself was enabled to keep a dacent portion of educated flesh between the master's birch and my ribs. The science itself is called Gastric Geography,

and is peculiar only to itinerant young gintlemen who seek for knowledge in the classical province of Munster.

"Here's a book that thravelled along wid myself through all my peregrinations—Creech's Translation of Horace. Keep it for my sake; and when you accomplish your education, if you return home this way, I'd thank you to give me a call. Farewell! God bless you and prosper you as I wish, and as I am sure you desarve."

He shook the lad by the hand; and as it was probable that his own former struggles with poverty, when in the pursuit of education, came with all the power of awakened recollection to his mind, he hastily drew his hand across his eyes, and returned to resume the brief but harmless authority of the ferula.

After arriving at the next town, Jemmy found himself once more prosecuting his journey alone. In proportion as he advanced into a strange land, his spirits became depressed, and his heart cleaved more and more to those whom he had left behind him. There is, however, an enthusiasm in the visions of youth, in the speculations of a young heart, which frequently overcomes difficulties that a mind taught by the experience of life would often shrink from encountering. We may all remember the utter recklessness of danger with which, in our youthful days, we crossed floods, or stood upon the brow of yawning precipices—feats which, in after years, the wealth of kingdoms could not

induce us to perform. Experience, as well as conscience, makes cowards of us all.

The poor scholar in the course of his journey had the satisfaction of finding himself an object of kind and hospitable attention to his countrymen. His satchel of books was literally a passport to their hearts. For instance, as he wended his solitary way, depressed and travel-worn, he was frequently accosted by labourers from behind a ditch on the roadside, and, after giving a brief history of the object he had in view, brought, if it was dinner-hour, to some farmhouse or cabin, where he was made to partake of their meal. Even those poor creatures who gain a scanty subsistence by keeping what are called "dhry lodgins," like *lucus a non lucendo,* because they never keep out the rain, and have mostly a bottle of whisky for those who know *how* to call for it,—even they, in most instances, not only refused to charge the poor scholar for his bed, but declined receiving any remuneration for his subsistence.

"Och, och, no, you poor young crathur, not from *you.* No, no; if we wouldn't help the likes o' you, who ought we to help? No dear; but instead o' the *airighad,*[39] jist lave us your blessin', an' maybe we'll thrive as well wid that, as we would wid your little pences, that you'll be wantin' for yourself, whin your frinds won't be near to help you."

Many, in fact, were the little marks of kindness and attention which the poor lad received on his way. Sometimes a ragged peasant, if

he happened to be his fellow-traveller, would carry his satchel so long as they travelled together, or a carman would give him a lift on his empty car; or some humorous postilion, or tipsy "shay-boy," with a comical leer in his eye, would shove him into his vehicle, remarking—

"Bedad, let nobody say you're a poor scholar *now*, an' you goin' to school in a coach! Be the piper that played afore Moses, if ever any rascal upbraids you wid it, tell him, says you—'You damned rap,' says you, 'I wint to school in a coach! an' that,' says you, 'was what none o' yer beggarly gineration was ever able to do,' says you; 'an' moreover, be the same token,' says you, 'be the holy farmer, if you bring it up to me, I'll make a third eye in your forchead wid the butt o' this whip,' says you. Whish! darlins! That's the go! There's drivin', Barny! Eh?"

At length, after much toil and travel, he reached the South, having experienced as he proceeded a series of affectionate attentions, which had, at least, the effect of reconciling him to the measure he had taken, and impressing upon his heart a deeper confidence in the kindness and hospitality of his countrymen.

Upon the evening of the day on which he terminated his journey, twilight was nearly falling; the town in which he intended to stop for the night was not a quarter of a mile before him, yet he was scarcely able to reach it; his short, yielding steps were evidently those of a young and fatigued traveller: his brow was moist with perspiration; he had just begun, too, to consider

in what manner he should introduce himself to the master who taught the school at which he had been advised to stop, when he heard a step behind him, and on looking back, he discovered a tall, well-made, ruddy-faced young man, dressed in black, with a book in his hand, walking after him.

"*Unde et quo viator?*" said the stranger on coming up with him.

"Oh, Sir," replied Jemmy, "I have not Latin *yet.*"

"You are on your way to seek it, however," replied the other. "Have you travelled far?"

"A long way, indeed, Sir; I came from the County——, Sir,—the upper part of it."

"Have you letters from your parish priest?"

"I have, Sir, and one from my father's landlord, Square Benson, if you ever heard of him."

"What's your object in learning Latin?"

"To be a priest, Sir, wid the help o' God; an' to rise my poor father an' mother out of their poverty."

His companion, after hearing this reply, bent a glance upon him, that indicated the awakening of an interest in the lad much greater than he probably otherwise would have felt.

"It's only of late," continued the boy, "that my father an' mother got poor; they were once very well to do in the world. But they were put out o' their farm in ordher that the agint might put a man that had married a *get*[40] of his own into it. My father intended to lay his case before Colonel B——, the landlord; but

he couldn't see him at all, bekase he never comes near the estate. The agint's called Yallow Sam, Sir; he's rich through cheatery an' dishonesty; puts money out at intherest, then goes to law, an' brakes the people entirely; for, somehow, he never was known to lose a law-suit at all, Sir. They say it's the divil, Sir, that keeps the lawyers on his side; an' that when he an' the lawyers do be dhrawin' up their writins, the devil —Got betune me an' harm!—does be helpin' them!"

"And is Colonel B——actually—or, rather, was he your father's landlord?"

"He was, indeed, Sir; it's thruth I'm tellin' you."

"Singular enough! Stand beside me here—do you see that large house to the right among the trees?"

"I do, Sir; a great big house, entirely—like a castle, Sir."

"The same. Well, that house belongs to Colonel B——, and I am very intimate with him. I am Catholic curate of this parish; and I was, before my ordination, private tutor in his family for four years."

"Maybe, Sir, you might have intherest to get my father back into his farm?"

"I do not know that, my good lad, for I am told Colonel B—— is rather embarrassed, and, if I mistake not, in the power of the man you call Yellow Sam, who has, I believe, heavy mortgages upon his property. But no matter; if I cannot help your father, I shall be able

to serve yourself. Where do you intend to stop for the night?"

"In dhry lodgin', Sir, that's where my father an' mother bid me stop always. They war very kind to me, Sir, in the dhry lodgins."

"Who is there in Ireland who would not be kind *to you,* my good boy? I trust you do not neglect your religious duties?"

"Wid the help o' God, Sir, I strive to attind to them as well as I can; particularly since I left my father and mother. Every night an' mornin', Sir, I say five Pathers, five Aves, an' a Creed; an' sometimes when I'm walkin' the road, I slip up an odd Pather, Sir, an' Ave, that God may grant me good luck."

The priest smiled at his candour and artlessness, and could not help feeling the interest which the boy had already excited in him increase.

"You do right," said he, "and take care that you neglect not the worship of God. Avoid bad company; be not quarrelsome at school; study to improve yourself diligently; attend mass regularly; and be punctual in going to confession."

After some further conversation the priest and he entered the town together.

"This is my house," said the former; "or if not altogether mine—at least that in which I lodge; let me see you here at two o'clock tomorrow. In the mean time, follow me, and I shall place you with a family where you will experience every kindness and attention that can make you comfortable."

He then led him a few doors up the street, till he stopped at a decent-looking "House of Entertainment," to the proprietors of which he introduced him.

"Be kind to this strange boy," said the worthy clergyman, "and whatever the charges of his board and lodging may be until we get him settled, I shall be accountable for them."

"God forbid, your Reverence, that ever a penny belongin' to a poor boy lookin' for his larnin' should go into our pockets, if he was wid us twelve months in the year. No—no! He can stay with the bouchaleens;[41] let them be thryin' one another in their books. If he is fardher on in the Latin then Andy, he can help Andy; an' if Andy has the foreway of him, why Andy can help him. Come here, boys, all of yez. Here's a comarade for yez—a dacent boy that's lookin' for his larnin', the Lord enable him! Now be kind to him, an' whisper," he added, in an under tone, "don't be bringin' a blush to the gorsoon's face. Do ye hear? Ma chorp! if ye do!—Now mind it. Ye know what I can do whin I'm well vexed! Go, now, an' get him somethin' to ate an' dhrink, an' let him sleep wid Barney in the feather bed."

During the course of the next day, the benevolent curate introduced him to the parish priest, who, from the frequent claims urged by poor scholars upon his patronage, felt no particular interest in his case. He wrote a short letter, however, to the master with whom Jemmy intended to become a pupil, stating that "he was

an honest boy, the son of *legitimate parents,* and worthy of consideration."

The curate, who saw further into the boy's character than the parish priest, accompanied him on the following day to the school; introduced him to the master in the most favourable manner, and recommended him in general to the hospitable care of all the pupils. This introduction did not serve the boy so much as might have been expected; there was nothing particular in the letter of the *parish* priest, and the curate was *but* a curate—no formidable personage in *any* church, where the goodwill of the rector has not been already secured.

Jemmy returned that day to his lodgings, and the next morning, with his Latin Grammar under his arm, he went to the school to taste the first bitter fruits of the tree of knowledge.

On entering it, which he did with a beating heart, he found the despot of a hundred subjects sitting behind a desk, with his hat on, a brow superciliously severe, and his nose crimped into a most cutting and vinegar curl. The truth was, the master knew the character of the curate, and felt that because he had taken Jemmy under his protection, no opportunity remained for him of fleecing the boy, under the pretence of securing his money, and that consequently the arrival of the poor scholar would be no windfall, as he had expected.

When Jemmy entered, he looked first at the master for his welcome; but the master, who verified the proverb, that there are none so blind as

those who will not see, took no notice whatsoever of him. The boy then looked timidly about the school in quest of a friendly face, and indeed few faces except friendly ones were turned upon him.

Several of the scholars rose up simultaneously to speak to him; but the pedagogue angrily inquired why they had left their seats and their business.

"Why, Sir," said a young Munsterman, with a fine Milesian face—"be Gorra, Sir, I blieve if *we* don't welcome the poor scholar, I think *you* won't. This is the boy, Sir, that Mr. O'-Brien came along wid yistherday, an' spoke so well of."

"I know that, Thady; and Misther O'Brien thinks, because he himself first passed through that overgrown hedge-school wid slates upon the roof of it, called Thrinity College, and matriculated in Maynooth afther, that he has legal authority to recommend every young vagrant to the gratuitous benefits of legitimate classicality. An', I suppose, that you are acting the Pathrun, too, Thady, and intind to take this young wild-goose under your protection?"

"Why, Sir, isn't he a poor scholar? Sure he mustn't want his bit an' sup, nor his night's lodgin', any how. You're to give him his larnin' only, Sir."

"I suppose so, Mr. Thaddeus; but this is the penalty of celebrity. If I weren't so celebrated a man for classics as I am, I would have none of this work. I tell you, Thady, if I had fifty

sons I wouldn't make one o' them *celebrated.*"

"Wait till you have one first, Sir, and you may make him as great a numskull as you plase, Masther."

"But in the mean time, Thady, I'll have no dictation from you, as to whether I'll have one or fifty; or as to whether he'll be an ass or a Newton. I say, that a dearth of larnin' is like a year of famine in Ireland. When the people are hard pushed, they bleed the fattest bullocks, an' live on their blood; an' so it is wid us Academicians. It's always he that has the most larned blood in his veins, and the greatest quantity of it, that such hungry leeches fasten on."

"Thrue for you, Sir," said the youth with a smile; "but they say the bullocks always fatten the betther for it. I hope you'll bleed well now, Sir."

"Thaddy, I don't like the curl of your nose; an', moreover, I have always found you prone to sedition. You remember your conduct at the 'Barring out.' I tell you it's well that your worthy father is a dacent wealthy man, or I'd be apt to give you a *memoria technica* on the *subtratum,* Thady."

"God be praised for my father's wealth, Sir! But I'd never wish to have a good memory in the way you mention."

"Faith, an' I'll be apt to add that to your other qualities, if you don't take care of yourself."

"I want no such addition, Masther; if you do, you'll be apt to subtract yourself from this

neighbourhood, an', may be, there won't be more than a cipher gone out of it, afther all."

"Thady, you're a wag," exclaimed the crestfallen pedagogue; "take the lad to your own sate, and show him his task. How is your sister's sore throat, Thady?"

"Why, Sir," replied the benevolent young wit, "she's betther than I am. She can *swallow* more, Sir."

"Not of larnin', Thady; there you've the widest gullet in the parish."

"My father's the richest man in it, Masther," replied Thady. "I think, Sir, my gullet and his purse are much about the same size—wid *you*."

"Thady, you're first-rate at a reply; but exceedingly deficient in the retort courteous. Take the lad to your sate, I say, and see how far he is advanced, and what he is fit for. I suppose, as you are so ginerous, you will volunteer to tache him yourself."

"I'll do that wid pleasure, Sir; but I'd like to know whether *you* intind to tache him or not."

"An' I'd like to know, Thady, who's to pay me for it, if I do. A purty return Michael Rooney made me for making him such a linguist as he is. 'You're a tyrant,' said he, when he grew up, 'and instead of expecting me to thank you for your instructions, you ought to thank me for not preparing you for the county hospital, as a memento of the cruelty and brutality you made me feel, when I had the misfortune to be a poor scholar under you.' And

so, because he became curate of the parish, he showed me the outside of it."

"But will you tache this poor young boy, Sir?"

"Let me know who's to guarantee his payments."

"I have money myself, Sir, to pay you for two years," replied Jemmy. "They told me, Sir, that you were a great scholar, an' I refused to stop in other schools by rason of the name you have for Latin and Greek."

"*Verbum sat.,*" exclaimed the barefaced knave. "Come here. Now, you see, I persave you have dacency. Here is your task; get that half page by heart. You have a cute look, an' I've no doubt but the stuff's in you. Come to me afther dismiss, 'till we have a little talk together."

He accordingly pointed out the task, after which he placed him at his side, lest the inexperienced boy might be put on his guard by any of the scholars. In this intention, however, he was frustrated by Thady, who, as he thoroughly detested the knavish tyrant, resolved to caution the poor scholar against his dishonesty. Thady, indeed, most heartily despised the mercenary pedagogue, not only for his obsequiousness to the rich, but on account of his severity to the children of the poor. About two o'clock the young wag went out for a few minutes, and immediately returned in great haste to inform the master, that Mr. Delany, the parish priest, and two other gentlemen, wished to see him over at

the Cross-Keys, an inn which was kept at a place called the Nine Mile House, within a few perches of the school. The parish priest, though an ignorant insipid old man, was the master's patron, and his slightest wish a divine law to him. The little despot, forgetting his prey, instantly repaired to the Cross-Keys, and in his absence, Thady, together with the larger boys of the school, made M'Evoy acquainted with the fraud about to be practised on him.

"His intintion," said they, "is to keep you at home to-night, in ordher to get whatever money you have into his own hands, that he may keep it safe for you; but if you give him a penny, you may bid farewell to it. Put it in the curate's hands," added Thady, "or in my father's, an' thin it'll be safe. At all evints, don't stay wid him this night. He'll take your money and then turn you off in three or four weeks."

"I didn't intind to give him my money," replied Jemmy; "a schoolmaster I met on my way here, bid me not to do it. I'll give it to the priest."

"Give it to the curate," said Thady—"wid him it'll be safe; for the parish priest doesn't like to throuble himself wid anything of the kind."

This was agreed upon; the boy was prepared against the designs of the master, and a plan laid down for his future conduct. In the mean time, the latter re-entered the school in a glow of indignation and disappointment.

Thady, however, disregarded him; and as the master knew that the influence of the boy's father could at any time remove him from the parish, his anger subsided without any very violent consequences. The parish priest was his avowed patron, it is true; but if the parish priest knew that Mr. O'Rorke was dissatisfied with him, that moment he would join Mr. O'Rorke in expelling him from the neighbourhood. Mr. O'Rorke was a wealthy and a hospitable man, but the schoolmaster was neither the one nor the other.

During school-hours that day, many a warm-hearted urchin entered into conversation with the poor scholar; some moved by curiosity to hear his brief and simple history; others anxious to offer him a temporary asylum in their fathers' houses; and several to know if he had the requisite books, assuring him that if he had not, they would lend them to him. These proofs of artless generosity touched the homeless youth's heart the more acutely, inasmuch as he could perceive but too clearly that the eye of the master rested upon him, from time to time, with no auspicious glance.

When the scholars were dismissed, a scene occurred which was calculated to produce a smile, although it certainly placed the poor scholar in a predicament by no means agreeable. It resulted from a contest among the boys as to who should first bring him home. The master who, by that cunning for which the knavish are remarkable, had discovered in the course of the day

that his design upon the boy's money was understood, did not ask him to his house. The contest was, therefore, among the scholars; who, when the master had disappeared from the schoolroom, formed themselves into a circle, of which Jemmy was the centre, each pressing his claim to secure him.

"The right's wid me," exclaimed Thady; "I stood to him all day, an' I say I'll have him for this night. Come wid me, Jimmy. Didn't I do most for you to-day?"

"I'll never forget your kindness," replied poor Jemmy, quite alarmed at the boisterous symptoms of pugilism which already began to appear. In fact, many a tiny fist was shut, as a suitable accompaniment to the arguments with which they enforced their assumed rights.

"There, now," continued Thady, "that puts an ind to it; he says he'll never forget my kindness. That's enough; come wid me, Jimmy."

"*Is it* enough?" said a lad, who, if his father was less wealthy than Thady's, was resolved to put strength of arm against strength of purse. "Maybe it isn't enough! *I* say I bar it, if your fadher was fifty times as rich!—Rich! Arrah, don't be comin' over us in regard of your riches, man alive! I'll bring the sthrange boy home this very night, an' it isn't your father's dirty money that'll prevint me."

"I'd advise you to get a double ditch about your nose," replied Thady, "before you begin to say anything disrespectful aginst my father. —Don't think to ballyrag over me. *I'll* bring

the boy, for I have the best right to him. Didn't I *do*[42] the masther on his account?"

"A double ditch about my nose?"

"Aiye!"

"Are you able to fight me?"

"I'm able to thry it, any how, an' willin' too."

"Do you *say* you're able to fight me?"

"I'll bring the boy home whether or not."

"Thady's not your match, Jack Ratigan," said another boy. "Why don't you challenge your match?"

"If *you* say a word, I'll half-sole your eye. Let him *say* whether he's able to fight me like a man or not. That's the chat."

"Half-sole my eye! Thin here I am, an' why don't you do it. You're crowin' over a boy that you're bigger than. *I'll* fight you for Thady. Now half-sole my eye if you dar! Eh? Here's my eye, now! Arrah, be the holy man, I'd—— Don't we know the white hen's in you. Didn't Barny Murtagh cow you at the black-pool, on Thursday last, whin we wor bathin'?"

"Come, Ratigan," said Thady, "peel, an' turn out. I say, I *am* able to fight you; an' I'll make you ate your words aginst my father, by way of givin' you your dinner. An' I'll make the dacent strange boy walk home wid me over your body—that is, if he'd not be afraid to dirty his feet."

Ratigan and Thady immediately set to, and in a few minutes there were scarcely a little pair of fists present that were not at work, either on behalf of the two first combatants, or with a

view to determine their own private rights in being the first to exercise hospitality towards the amazed poor scholar. The fact was, that while the two largest boys were arguing the point, about thirty or forty minor disputes all ran parallel to theirs, and their mode of decision was immediately adopted by the pugnacious urchins of the school. In this manner they were engaged, poor Jemmy attempting to tranquillise and separate them, when the master, armed in all his terrors, presented himself.

With the tact of a sly old disciplinarian, he first secured the door, and instantly commenced the agreeable task of promiscuous castigation. Heavy and vindictive did his arm descend upon those whom he suspected to have cautioned the boy against his rapacity; nor amongst the warm-hearted lads, whom he thwacked so cunningly, was Thady passed over with a tender hand. Springs, bouncings, doublings, blowing of fingers, scratching of heads, and rubbing of elbows—shouts of pain, and doleful exclamations, accompanied by action that displayed surpassing agility—marked the effect with which he plied the instrument of punishment. In the mean time, the spirit of reaction, to use a modern phrase, began to set in. The master, while thus engaged in dispensing justice, first received a rather vigorous thwack on the ear from behind, by an anonymous contributor, who gifted him with what is called a musical ear, for it sang during five minutes afterwards. The monarch, when turning round to ascertain the traitor, re-

ceived another insult on the most indefensible side, and that with a cordiality of manner, that induced him to send his right hand reconnoitring the invaded part. He wheeled round a second time with more alacrity than before; but nothing less than the head of Janus could have secured him on the occasion. The anonymous contributor sent him a fresh article. This was supported by another kick behind: the turf began to fly; one after another came in contact with his head and shoulders so rapidly, that he found himself, instead of being the assailant, actually placed upon his defence. The insurrection spread, the turf flew more thickly; his subjects closed in upon him in a more compact body; every little fist itched to be at him; the larger boys boldly laid in the facers, punched him in the stomach, treated him most opprobriously behind, every kick and cuff accompanied by a memento of his cruelty; in short, they compelled him, like Charles the Tenth, ignominiously to fly from his dominions.

On finding the throne vacant, some of them suggested that it ought to be overturned altogether. Thady, however, who was the ringleader of the rebellion, persuaded them to be satisfied with what they had accomplished, and consequently succeeded in preventing them from destroying the fixtures.

Again they surrounded the poor scholar, who, feeling himself the cause of the insurrection, appeared an object of much pity. Such was his grief that he could scarcely reply to them. Their

consolation on witnessing his distress was overwhelming. They desired him to think nothing of it; if the master, they told him, should wreak his resentment on *him,* "be the holy farmer, they would *pay*[48] the *masther.*" Thady's claim was now undisputed. With only the injury of a black eye, and a lip swelled to the size of a sausage, he walked home in triumph, the poor scholar accompanying him.

The master, who feared that this open contempt of his authority, running up, as it did, into a very unpleasant species of retaliation, was something like a signal for him to leave the parish, felt rather more of the penitent the next morning than did any of his pupils. He was by no means displeased, therefore, to see them drop in about the usual hour. They came, however, not one by one, but in compact groups, each officered by two or three of the larger boys; for they feared that, had they entered singly, he might have punished them singly, until his vengeance should be satisfied. It was by bitter and obstinate struggles that they succeeded in repressing their mirth, when he appeared at his desk with one of his eyes literally closed, and his nose considerably improved in size and richness of colour. When they were all assembled, he hemmed several times, and, in a woe-begone tone of voice, split—by a feeble attempt at maintaining authority, and suppressing his terrors—into two parts, that jarred most ludicrously, he briefly addressed them as follows:—

"Gintlemen classics, I have been now twenty-

six years engaged in the propagation of Latin and Greek litherature, in conjunction wid mathematics, but never, until yesterday, has my influence been spurned; never, until yesterday, have sacrilegious hands been laid upon my person; never, until yesterday, have I been kicked—insidiously, ungallantly, and treacherously kicked—by my own subjects. No, gintlemen,—and whether I ought to bestow that respectable epithet upon you after yesterday's proceedings is a matter which admits of dispute,—never before has the lid of my eye been laid drooping, and that in such a manner that I must be blind to the conduct of half of my pupils, whether I will or not. You have complained, it appears, of my want of impartiality; but, God knows, you have compelled me to be partial for a week to come. Neither blame me if I may appear to look upon you with scorn for the next fortnight; for I am compelled to turn up my nose at you much against my own inclination. You need never want an illustration of the *naso adunco* of Horace again; I'm a living example of it. That, and the doctrine of projectile forces, have been exemplified in a manner that will prevent me from ever relishing these subjects in future. No king can consider himself properly such, until after he has received the oil of consecration; but you, it appears, think differently. You have unkinged me first, and anointed me afterwards; but I say, no potentate would relish such unction. It smells confoundedly of republicanism. Maybe this is what *you* understand by the Republic of

Letters; but, if it be, I would advise you to change your principles. You treated my ribs as if they were the ribs of a common man; my shins you took liberties with even to excoriation; my head you made a target of, for your hardest turf; and my nose you dishonoured to my face. Was this ginerous? was it discreet? was it subordinate? and, above all, was it *classical?* However, I will show you what greatness of mind is. I will convince you that it is more noble and god-like to forgive an injury, or rather five dozen injuries, than to avenge one; when—hem—yes, I say, when I—I—*might* so easily avenge it. I now present you wid an amnesty: return to your allegiance; but never, while in this seminary, under my tuition, attimpt to take the execution of the laws into your own hands. Homerians, come up!"

This address, into which he purposely threw a dash of banter and mock gravity, delivered with the accompaniments of his swelled nose and drooping eye, pacified his audience more readily than a serious one would have done. It was received without any reply or symptom of disrespect, unless the occasional squeak of a suppressed laugh, or the visible shaking of many sides with inward convulsions, might be termed such.

In the course of the day, it is true, their powers of maintaining gravity were put to a severe test, particularly when, while hearing a class, he began to adjust his drooping eye-lid, or coax back his nose into its natural position. On these

occasions a sudden pause might be noticed in the business of the class; the boy's voice, who happened to read at the time, would fail him; and, on resuming his sentence by command of the master, its tone was tremulous, and scarcely adequate to the task of repeating the words without his bursting into laughter. The master observed all this clearly enough, but his mind was already made up to take no further notice of what had happened.

All this, however, conduced to render the situation of the poor scholar much more easy, or rather less penal, than it would otherwise have been. Still the innocent lad was on all possible occasions a butt for this miscreant. To miss a word was a pretext for giving him a cruel blow. To arrive two or three minutes later than the appointed hour was certain on his part to be attended with immediate punishment. Jemmy bore it all with silent heroism. He shed no tear —he uttered no remonstrance; but, under the anguish of pain so barbarously inflicted, he occasionally looked round upon his schoolfellows with an expression of silent entreaty that was seldom lost upon them. Cruel to him the master often was; but to inhuman barbarity the large scholars never permitted him to descend. Whenever any of the wealthier farmers' sons had neglected their lessons, or deserved chastisement, the mercenary creature substituted a joke for the birch; but as soon as the son of a poor man, or, which was better still, the poor scholar came before him, he transferred that punishment which the

wickedness or idleness of respectable boys deserved, to his or their shoulders. For this outrageous injustice the hard-hearted old villain had some plausible excuse ready, so that it was in many cases difficult for Jemmy's generous companions to interfere in his behalf, or parry the sophistry of such a petty tyrant.

In this miserable way did he pass over the tedious period of a year, going about every night in rotation with the scholars, and severely beaten on all possible occasions by the master. His conduct and manners won him the love and esteem of all except his tyrant instructor. His assiduity was remarkable, and his progress in the elements of English and classical literature surprisingly rapid. This added considerably to his character, and procured him additional respect. It was not long before he made himself useful and obliging to all the boys beneath his standing in the school. These services he rendered with an air of such kindness, and a grace so naturally winning, that the attachment of his schoolfellows increased towards him from day to day. Thady was his patron on all occasions: neither did the Curate neglect him. The latter was his banker, for the boy had very properly committed his purse to his keeping. At the expiration of every quarter the schoolmaster received the amount of his bill, which he never failed to send in, when due.

Jemmy had not, during his first year's residence in the south, forgotten to request the kind Curate's interference with the landlord, on behalf

of his father. To be the instrument of restoring his family to their former comfortable holding under Colonel B——, would have afforded him, without excepting the certainty of his own eventual success, the highest gratification. Of this, however, there was no hope, and nothing remained for him but assiduity in his studies, and patience under the merciless scourge of his teacher. In addition to an engaging person and agreeable manners, nature had gifted him with a high order of intellect, and great powers of acquiring knowledge. The latter he applied to the business before him with indefatigable industry. The school at which he settled was considered the first in Munster; and the master, notwithstanding his known severity, stood high, and justly so, in the opinion of the people, as an excellent classical and mathematical scholar. Jemmy applied himself to the study of both, and at the expiration of his second year had made such progress, that he stood without a rival in the school.

It is usual, as we have said, for the poor scholar to go night after night, in rotation, with his schoolfellows; he is particularly welcome in the houses of those farmers whose children are not so far advanced as himself. It is expected that he should instruct them in the evenings, and enable them to prepare their lessons for the following day, a task which he always performs with pleasure, because in teaching them he is confirming his own mind in the knowledge which he has previously acquired. Towards the end of the

second year, however, he ceased to circulate in this manner. Two or three of the most independent parishioners, whose sons were only commencing their studies, agreed to keep him week about; an arrangement highly convenient to him, as by that means he was not so frequently dragged, as he had been, to the remotest parts of the parish. Being an expert penman, he acted also as secretary of grievances to the poor, who frequently employed him to draw up petitions to obdurate landlords, or to their more obdurate agents, and letters to soldiers in all parts of the world, from their anxious and affectionate relations. All these little services he performed kindly and promptly; many a blessing was fervently invoked upon his head; the "good word" and "the prayer" were all they could afford, as they said, "to the *bouchal dhas oge*" that tuck the world an him for sake o' the larnin', an' that hasn't the kindliness o' the mother's breath an' the mother's hand near him, the crathur."

About the middle of the third year he was once more thrown upon the general hospitality of the people. The three farmers with whom he had lived for the preceding six months, emigrated to America, as did many others of that class which, in this country, most nearly approximates to the substantial yeomanry of England. The little purse, too, which he had placed in the hands of the kind priest, was exhausted; a season of famine, sickness, and general distress had set in; and the master, on understanding that he was without money, became diabolically savage. In

short, the boy's difficulties increased to a perplexing degree. Even Thady and his grown companions, who usually interposed in his behalf when the master became excessive in correcting him, had left the school, and now the prospect before him was dark and cheerless indeed. For a few months longer, however, he struggled on, meeting every difficulty with meek endurance. From his very boyhood he had reverenced the sanctity of religion, and was actuated by a strong devotional spirit. He trusted in God, and worshipped him night and morning with a sincere heart.

At this crisis he was certainly an object of pity; his clothes, which for some time before had been reduced to tatters, he had replaced by a cast-off coat and small-clothes, a present from his friend the Curate, who never abandoned him. This worthy young man could not afford him money, for as he had but fifty pounds a-year, with which to clothe, subsist himself, keep a horse, and pay rent, it was hardly to be expected that his benevolence could be extensive. In addition to this, famine and contagious disease raged with formidable violence in the parish; so that the claims upon his bounty of hundreds who lay huddled together in cold cabins, in outhouses, and even behind ditches, were incessant as well as heart-rending. The number of interments that took place daily in the parish was awful; nothing could be seen but funerals attended by groups of ragged and emaciated creatures, from whose hollow eyes gleamed forth the wolfish fire of famine. The wretched men-

dicants were countless, and the number of coffins that lay on the public roads—where, attended by the nearest relatives of the deceased, they had been placed for the purpose of procuring charity—were greater than ever had been remembered by the oldest inhabitant.

Such was the state of the parish when our poor scholar complained one day in school of severe illness. The early symptoms of the prevailing epidemic were well known; and, on examining more closely into his situation, it was clear that, according to the phraseology of the people, he had "got the faver on his back"—had caught "a heavy load of the faver." The Irish are particularly apprehensive of contagious maladies. The moment it had been discovered that Jemmy was infected, his schoolfellows avoided him with a feeling of terror scarcely credible, and the inhuman master was delighted at any circumstance, however calamitous, that might afford him a pretext for driving the friendless youth out of the school.

"Take," said he, "every thing belongin' to you out of my establishment: you were always a plague to me, but now more so than ever. Be quick, sarra, and nidificate for yourself somewhere else. Do you want to thranslate my siminary into an hospital, and myself into Lazarus, as president? Go off, you wild goose! and conjugate *ægroto* wherever you find a convenient spot to do it in."

The poor boy silently and with difficulty arose, collected his books, and, slinging on his satchel,

looked to his schoolfellows, as if he had said, "Which of you will afford me a place where to lay my aching head?" All, however, kept aloof from him; he had caught the contagion, and the contagion, they knew, had swept the people away in vast numbers.

At length he spoke. "Is there any boy among you," he inquired, "who will bring me home? You know I am a stranger, an' far from my own, God help me!"

This was followed by a profound silence. Not one of those who had so often befriended him, or who would, on any other occasion, share their bed and their last morsel with him, would even touch his person, much less allow him, when thus plague-stricken, to take shelter under their roof. Such are the effects of selfishness, when it is opposed only by the force of those natural qualities that are not elevated into a sense of duty by clear and profound views of Christian truth. It is one thing to perform a kind action from constitutional impulse, and another to perform it as a fixed duty, perhaps contrary to that impulse.

Jemmy, on finding himself avoided like a Hebrew leper of old, silently left the school, and walked on without knowing whither he should ultimately direct his steps. He thought of his friend the priest, but the distance between him and his place of abode was greater, he felt, than his illness would permit him to travel. He walked on, therefore, in such a state of misery as can scarcely be conceived, much less described.

His head ached excessively, an intense pain shot like death-pangs through his lower back and loins, his face was flushed, and his head giddy. In this state he proceeded, without money or friends; without a house to shelter him, or a bed on which to lie, far from his own relations, and with the prospect of death, under circumstances peculiarly dreadful, before him! He tottered on, however; the earth, as he imagined, reeling under him; the heavens, he thought, streaming with fire, and the earth indistinct and discoloured. Home, the paradise of the absent—home, the heaven of the affections—with all its tenderness and blessed sympathies, rushed upon his heart. His father's deep but quiet kindness, his mother's sedulous love; his brothers, all that they had been to him—these, with their thousand heart-stirring associations, started into life before him again and again. But he was now ill, and the mother —Ah! the enduring sense of that mother's love placed her brightest, and strongest, and tenderest, in the far and distant group which his imagination bodied forth.

"Mother!" he exclaimed—"oh, mother, why —why did I ever lave you? Mother! the son you loved is dyin' without a kind word, lonely and neglected, in a strange land! Oh, my *own* mother! why did I ever lave you?"

The conflict between his illness and his affections overcame him; he staggered—he grasped as if for assistance at the vacant air—he fell, and lay for some time in a state of insensibility.

The season was then that of midsummer, and

early meadows were falling before the scythe. As the boy sank to the earth, a few labourers were eating their scanty dinner of bread and milk so near him, that only a dry low ditch ran between him and them. They had heard his words indistinctly, and one of them was putting the milk bottle to his lips when, attracted by the voice, he looked in the direction of the speaker, and saw him fall. They immediately recognised "the poor scholar," and in a moment were attempting to recover him.

"Why thin, my poor fellow, what's *a shaughran* wid you?"

Jemmy started for a moment, looked about him, and asked, "Where am I?"

"Faitha, thin, you're in Rory Connor's field, widin a few perches of the high-road. But what ails you, poor boy? Is it sick you are?"

"It is," he replied; "I have got the faver. I had to lave school; none o' them would take me home, an' I doubt I must die in a Christian counthry undher the open canopy of heaven. Oh, for God's sake, don't lave me! Bring me to some hospital, or into the next town, where people may know that I'm sick, an' maybe some kind Christian will relieve me."

The moment he mentioned "faver," the men involuntarily drew back, after having laid him reclining against the green ditch.

"Thin, thundher an' turf, what's to be done?" exclaimed one of them, thrusting his spread fingers into his hair. "Is the poor boy to die widout help among Christyeens like uz?"

"But hasn't he the sickness?" exclaimed another: "an' in that case, Pether, what's to be done?"

"Why, you gommoch, isn't that what I'm wantin' to know? You wor ever and always an ass, Paddy, except before you wor born, an' thin you wor like Major M'Curragh, worse nor nothin'. Why the sarra do you be spakin' about the sickness, the Lord protect us, whin you know I'm so timersome of it?"

"But considher," said another, edging off from Jemmy, however, "that he's a poor scholar, an' that there's a great blessin' to thim that assists the likes of him."

"Ay, is there that, sure enough, Dan; but you see—blur-an-age, what's to be done? He can't die this way, wid nobody wid him but himself."

"Let us help him!" exclaimed another, "for *God's* sake, an' we won't be apt to take it thin."

"Ay, but how can we help him, Frank? Oh, bedad, it 'ud be murdherin' shame, all out, to let the crathur die by himself, widout company, so it would."

"No one will take him in, for fraid o' the sickness. Why, I'll tell you what we'll do:—Let us shkame the remainder o' this day off o' the Major, an' build a shed for him on the road-side here, jist against the ditch. It's as dhry as powdher. Thin we can go through the neighbours, an' get thim to sit near him time about, an' to bring him little *dhreeniens* o' nourishment."

"Divil a purtier! Come thin, let us get a lot o' the neighbours, an' set about it, poor bouchal.

Who knows but it may bring down a blessin' upon us, aither in this world or the next."

"Amin! I pray Gorra! an' so it will sure! doesn't the Catechiz say it? 'There is but one Church,' says the Catechiz, 'one Faith, an' one Baptism.' Bedad, there's a power o' fine larnin' in the same Catechiz, so there is, an' mighty improvin'."

An Irishman never works for wages with half the zeal which he displays when working for love. Ere many hours passed, a number of neighbours had assembled, and Jemmy found himself on a bunch of clean straw, in a little shed erected for him at the edge of the road.

Perhaps it would be impossible to conceive a more gloomy state of misery than that in which young M'Evoy found himself. Stretched on the side of the public road, in a shed formed of a few loose sticks covered over with "scraws," that is, the sward of the earth pared into thin stripes—removed above fifty perches from any human habitation—his body racked with a furious and oppressive fever—his mind conscious of all the horrors by which he was surrounded—without the comforts even of a bed or bed-clothes—and, what was worst of all, those from whom he might expect kindness, afraid to approach him! Lying helpless, under these circumstances, it ought not to be wondered at, if he wished that death might at once close his extraordinary sufferings, and terminate those struggles which filial piety had prompted him to encounter.

This certainly is a dark picture, but our humble

hero knew that even there the power and goodness of God could support him. The boy trusted in God; and when removed into his little shed, and stretched upon his clean straw, he felt that his situation was, in good sooth, comfortable when contrasted with what it might have been, if left to perish behind a ditch, exposed to the scorching heat of the sun by day, and the dews of heaven by night. He felt the hand of God even in this, and placed himself, with a short but fervent prayer, under his fatherly protection.

Irishmen however, are not just that description of persons who can pursue their usual avocations, and see a fellow-creature die, without such attentions as they ean afford him; not precisely so bad as that, gentle reader! Jemmy had not been two hours on his straw, when a second shed much larger than his own, was raised within a dozen yards of it. In this a fire was lit; a small pot was then procured, milk was sent in, and such other little comforts brought together, as they supposed necessary for the sick boy. Having accomplished these matters, a kind of guard was set to watch and nurse-tend him; a pitchfork was got, on the prongs of which they intended to reach him bread across the ditch; and a long-shafted shovel was borrowed, on which to furnish him drink with safety to themselves. That inextinguishable vein of humour, which in Ireland mingles even with death and calamity, was also visible here. The ragged half-starved creatures laughed heartily at the oddity of their own inventions, and enjoyed the ingenuity with which

they made shift to meet the exigencies of the occasion, without in the slightest degree having their sympathy and concern for the afflicted youth lessened.

When their arrangements were completed, one of them (he of the scythe) made a little whey, which, in lieu of a spoon, he stirred with the end of his tobacco-pipe; he then extended it across the ditch upon the shovel, after having put it in a tin porringer.

"Do you want a taste o' whay, avourneen?"

"Oh, I do," replied Jemmy; "give me a drink for God's sake."

"There it is, a bouchal, on the shovel. Musha if myself rightly knows what side you're lyin' an, or I'd put it as near your lips as I could. Come, man, be stout, don't be cast down at all at all; sure, bud-an-age, we're shovelin' the whay to you, any how."

"I have it," replied the boy—"oh, I have it. May God never forget this to you, whoever you are."

"Faith, if you want to know who I am, I'm Pether Connor the mower, that never seen tomorrow. Be Gorra, poor boy, you mustn't let your spirits down at all at all. Sure the neighbours is all bint to watch an' take care of you.—May I take away the shovel?—an' they've built a brave snug shed here beside yours, where they'll stay wid you time about until you get well. We'll feed you wid whay enough, bekase we've made up our minds to stale lots o' sweet milk for you. Ned Branagan an' I will milk Rody

Hartigan's cows to-night, wid the help o' God. Divil a bit sin in it, so there isn't, an' if there is, too, be my sowl there's no harm in it any way—for he's but a nager himself, the same Rody. So, acushla, keep a light heart, for, be Gorra, you're sure o' the thin pair o' throwsers, any how. Don't think you're desarted—for you're not. It's all in regard o' bein' afeard o' this faver, or it's not this way you'd be; but, as I said a while agone, when you want anything, spake, for you'll still find two or three of us beside you here, night an' day. Now won't you promise to keep your mind asy, when you know that we're beside you?"

"God bless you," replied Jemmy, "you've taken a weight off of my heart. I thought I'd die wid nobody near me at all."

"Oh, the sorra fear of it. Keep your heart up. We'll stale lots o' milk for you. Bad scran to the baste in the parish but we'll milk, sooner nor you'd want the whay, you crathur you."

The boy felt relieved, but his malady increased; and were it not that the confidence of being thus watched and attended to supported him, it is more than probable he would have sunk under it.

When the hour of closing the day's labour arrived, Major —— came down to inspect the progress which his mowers had made, and the goodness of the crop upon his meadows. No sooner was he perceived at a distance, than the scythes were instantly resumed, and the mowers pursued their employment with an appearance

of zeal and honesty that could not be suspected.

On arriving at the meadows, however, he was evidently startled at the miserable day's work they had performed.

"Why, Connor," said he, addressing the nurse-tender, "how is this? I protest you have not performed half a day's labour! This is miserable and shameful."

"Bedad, Major, it's thrue for your honour, sure enough. It's a poor day's work, the never a doubt of it. But be all the books that *never* was opened or shut, busier men than we wor since mornin' couldn't be had for love or money. You see, Major, these meadows, bad luck to them!—God pardon me for cursin' the harmless crathurs, for sure 'tisn't their fau't, Sir: but you see, Major, I'll insinse you into it. Now look here, your honour. Did you ever see deeper meadow nor that same, since you war foal—hem—since you war born, your honour? Maybe, your honour, Major, 'ud just take the scythe an' sthrive to cut a swaythe?"

"Nonsense, Connor; don't you know I cannot."

"Thin, be Gorra, Sir, I wish you could thry it. I'd kiss the book, we did more labour, an' worked harder this day, nor any day for the last fortnight. If it was light grass, Sir—see here, Major, here's a light bit—now, look at how the scythe runs through it! Thin look at here agin—just observe this, Major—why, murdher alive, don't you see how slow she goes through *that* where the grass is *heavy!* Bedad, Major, you'll

be made up this sason wid your hay, any how. Divil carry the finer meadow ever I put scythe in nor this same meadow, God bless it!"

"Yes, I see it, Connor; I agree with you as to its goodness. But the reason of that is, Connor, that I always direct my steward myself in laying it down for grass. Yes, you're right, Connor; if the meadow were light, you could certainly mow comparatively a greater space in a day."

"Be the livin' farmer, God pardon me for swearin', it's a pleasure to have dalins wid a gintleman like you, that knows things as cute as if you war a mower yourself, your honour. Bedad, I'll go bail, Sir, it wouldn't be hard to tache you that same."

"Why, to tell you the truth, Connor, you have hit me off pretty well. I'm beginning to get a taste for agriculture."

"But," said Connor, scratching his head, "won't your honour allow us the price of a glass, or a pint o' porther, for our hard day's work. Bad cess to me, Sir, but this meadow 'ill play the puck wid us afore we get it finished. Atween ourselves, Sir—if it wouldn't be takin' freedoms—if you'd look to *your own* farmin' *yourself*. The steward, Sir, is a dacent kind of a man; but, sowl, he couldn't hould a candle to your honour in seein' to the best way of doing a thing, Sir. Won't you allow us glasses a-piece, your honour? Faix, we're kilt entirely, so we are."

"Here is half-a-crown among you, Connor; but don't get drunk."

"Dhrunk! Musha, long may you reign, Sir! Be the scythe in my hand, I'd rather—Och, faix you're one o' the ould sort, Sir—the raal Irish gintleman, your honour. An' sure your name's far and near for that, any how."

Connor's face would have done the heart of Brooke or Cruickshank good, had either of them seen it charged with humour so rich as that which beamed from it, when the Major left them to enjoy their own comments upon what had happened.

"Oh, be the livin' farmer," said Connor, "are we alive at all afther *doin'* the Major! Oh, thin, the curse o' the crows upon you, Major darlin', but you are a *Manus!*[45] The damn' rip o' the world, that wouldn't give the breath he breathes to the poor for God's sake, and he'll *threwn* a man half-a-crown that'll blarney him for farmin', and him doesn't know the differ atween a Cork-red an' a Yallow-leg."[46]

"Faith, he's the boy that knows how to make a Judy of himself any way, Pether," exclaimed another. "The divil a hapurth asier nor to give these Quality the bag to hould, so there isn't. An' they think themselves so cute, too!"

"Augh!" said a third, "couldn't a man find the soft side o' them as asy as make out the way to his own nose, widout being led to it. Divil a sin it is to *do them,* any way. Sure, he thinks we wor tooth an' nail at the meadow all day;

an' me thought I'd never recover it, to see Pether here—the rise he tuck out of him! Ha, ha, ha—och, och, murdher, oh!"

"Faith," exclaimed Connor, "'twas good, you see, to help the poor scholar; only for it we couldn't get shkamin' the half-crown out of him. I think we ought to give the crathur half of it, an' him so sick: he'll be wantin' it worse nor ourselves."

"Oh, be Gorra, he's fairly entitled to that. I vote him fifteen pince."

"Surely!" they exclaimed unanimously. "Tundher-an'-turf! wasn't he the manes of gettin' it for us?"

"Jemmy, a bouchal," said Connor, across the ditch to M'Evoy, "are you sleepin'?"

"Sleepin'! Oh, no," replied Jemmy; "I'd give the wide world for one wink of asy sleep."

"Well, aroon, here's fifteen pince for you, that we shkam—Will I tell him how we got it?"

"No don't," replied his neighbours; "the boy's given to devotion, an' maybe might scruple to take it."

"Here's fifteen pince, avourneen, on the shovel, that we're givin' you *for God's sake.* If you *over*[47] this, won't you offer up a prayer for us? Won't you, avick?"

"I can never forget your kindness," replied Jemmy; "I will always pray for you, and may God for ever bless you and yours!"

"Poor crathur! May the Heavens above have prosthration on him! Upon my sowl, it's good to have his blessin' an' his prayer. Now

don't fret, Jemmy; we're lavin' you wid a lot o' neighbours here. They'll watch you time about, so that whin you want anything, call, avourneen, an' there'll still be some one here to answer. God bless you, an' restore you, till we come wid the milk we'll stale for you, wid the help o' God. Bad cess to me, but it 'ud be a mortual sin, so it would, to let the poor boy die at all, an' him so far from home. For, as the Catechiz says, 'There is but one Faith, one Church, and one Baptism!' Well, the readin' that's in that Catechiz is mighty improvin', glory be to God!"

It would be utterly impossible to detail the affliction which our poor scholar suffered in this wretched shed, for the space of a fortnight, notwithstanding the efforts of those kind-hearted people to render his situation comfortable.

The little wigwam they had constructed near him, was never, even for a moment, during his whole illness, without two or three persons ready to attend him. In the evening their numbers increased; a fire was always kept burning, over which a little pot for making whey or gruel was suspended. At night they amused each other with anecdotes and laughter, and occasionally with songs, when certain that their patient was not asleep. Their exertions to steal milk for him were performed with uncommon glee, and related among themselves with great humour. These thefts would have been unnecessary, had not the famine which then prevailed through the province been so excessive. The crowds that

swarmed about the houses of wealthy farmers, supplicating a morsel to keep body and soul together, resembled nothing which our English readers ever had an opportunity of seeing. Ragged, emaciated creatures tottered about with an expression of wildness and voracity in their gaunt features; fathers and mothers reeled under the burthen of their beloved children, the latter either sick, or literally expiring for want of food; and the widow, in many instances, was compelled to lay down her head to die, with the wail, the feeble wail, of her withered orphans mingling with her last moans! In such a state of things it was difficult to procure a sufficient quantity of milk to allay the unnatural thirst even of one individual, when parched by the scorching heat of a fever. Notwithstanding this, his wants were for the most part anticipated, so far as their means would allow them; his shed was kept waterproof; and either shovel or pitchfork always ready to be extended to him, by way of substitution for the right hand of fellowship.

When he called for anything, the usual observation was, "Husht! the crathur's callin'; I must take the shovel an' see what he wants."

There were times, it is true, when the mirth of the poor fellows was very low, for hunger was generally among themselves; there were times when their own little shed presented a touching and melancholy spectacle—perhaps we ought also to add, a noble one; for, to contemplate a number of men, considered rude and semi-barbarous, devoting themselves, in the midst of pri-

vations the most cutting and oppressive, to the care and preservation of a strange lad, merely because they knew him to be without friends and protection, is to witness a display of virtue truly magnanimous. The food on which some of the persons were occasionally compelled to live, was blood boiled up with a little oatmeal; for when a season of famine occurs in Ireland, the people usually bleed the cows and bullocks to preserve themselves from actual starvation. It is truly a sight of appalling misery to behold feeble women gliding across the country, carrying their cans and pitchers, actually trampling upon fertility and fatness, and collected in the corner of some grazier's farm, waiting, gaunt and ravenous as Gouls, for their portion of blood. During these melancholy periods of want, everything in the shape of an esculent disappears. The miserable creatures will pick up chicken-weed, nettles, sorrell, bugloss, preshagh, and sea-weed, which they will boil and eat with the voracity of persons writhing under the united agonies of hunger and death! Yet, singular to say, the very country thus groaning under such a terrible sweep of famine is actually pouring from all her ports a profusion of food, day after day; flinging it from her fertile bosom, with the wanton excess of a prodigal oppressed by abundance.

Despite, however, of all that the poor scholar's nurse-guard suffered, he was attended with a fidelity of care and sympathy which no calamity could shake. Nor was this care fruitless; after the fever had passed through its usual stages, he

began to recover. In fact, it has been observed very truly, that scarcely any person has been known to die under circumstances similar to those of the poor scholar. These sheds, the erection of which is not unfrequent in case of fever, have the advantage of pure free air, by which the patient is cooled and refreshed. Be the cause of it what it may, the fact has been established, and we feel satisfaction in being able to adduce our humble hero as an additional proof of the many recoveries which take place in situations apparently so unfavourable to human life. But how is it possible to detail what M'Evoy suffered during this fortnight of intense agony? Not those who can command the luxuries of life—not those who can reach its comforts—nor those who can supply themselves with its bare necessaries—neither the cotter who struggles to support his wife and helpless children—the mendicant who begs from door to door—nor even the felon in his cell—can imagine what he felt in the solitary misery of his feverish bed. Hard is the heart that cannot *feel* his sorrows, when, stretched beside the common way, without a human face to look on, he called upon the mother whose brain, had she known his situation, would have been riven—whose affectionate heart would have been broken by the knowledge of his affliction. It was a situation which afterwards appeared to him dark and terrible. The pencil of the painter could not depict it, nor the pen of the poet describe it, except like a dim vision, which neither the heart nor the imagination are

able to give to the world as a tale steeped in the sympathies excited by reality.

His whole heart and soul, as he afterwards acknowledged, were, during his trying illness, *at home*. The voices of his parents, of his sisters, and of his brothers, were always in his ears; their countenances surrounded his cold and lonely shed; their hands touched him; their eyes looked upon him in sorrow—and their tears bedewed him. Even there, the light of his mother's love, though she herself was distant, shone upon his sorrowful couch; and he has declared, that in no past moment of affection did his soul ever burn with a sense of its presence so strongly as it did in the heart-dreams of his severest illness. But God is love, "and tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb."

Much of all his sufferings would have been alleviated, were it not that his two best friends in the parish, Thady and the curate, had been both prostrated by the fever at the same time with himself. There was consequently no person of respectability in the neighbourhood cognizant of his situation. He was left to the humbler class of the peasantry, and honourably did they, with all their errors and ignorances, discharge those duties which greater wealth and greater knowledge would, probably, have left unperformed.

On the morning of the last day he ever intended to spend in the shed, at eleven o'clock, he heard the sounds of horses' feet passing along the road. The circumstance was one quite familiar

to him; but these horsemen, whoever they might be, stopped, and immediately after, two respectable looking men, dressed in black, approached him. His forlorn state and frightfully-wasted appearance startled them, and the younger of the two asked, in a tone of voice which went directly to his heart, how it was that they found him in a situation so desolate.

The kind interest implied by the words, and probably a sense of his utterly destitute state, affected him strongly, and he burst into tears. The strangers looked at each other, then at him; and if looks could express sympathy, theirs expressed it.

"My good boy," said the first, "how is it that we find you in a situation so deplorable and wretched as this? Who are you, or why is it that you have not a friendly roof to shelter you?"

"I'm a poor scholar," replied Jemmy, "the son of honest but reduced parents: I came to this part of the country with the intention of preparing myself for Maynooth, and, if it might plase God, with the hope of being able to raise them out of their distress."

The strangers looked more earnestly at the boy; sickness had touched his fine intellectual features into a purity of expression almost ethereal. His fair skin appeared nearly transparent, and the light of truth and candour lit up his countenance with a lustre which affliction could not dim.

The other stranger approached him more nearly, stooped for a moment, and felt his pulse.

"How long have you been in this country?" he inquired.

"Nearly three years."

"You have been ill of the fever which is so prevalent; but how did you come to be left to the chance of perishing upon the highway?"

"Why, Sir, the people were afeard to let me into their houses in consequence of the faver. I got ill in school, Sir, but no boy would venture to bring me home, an' the master turned me out, to die, I believe. May God forgive him!"

"Who was your master, my child?"

"The great Mr. ——, Sir. If Mr. O'Brien, the curate of the parish, hadn't been ill himself at the same time, or if Mr. O'Rorke's son, Thady, hadn't been laid on his back, too, Sir, I wouldn't suffer what I did."

"Has the curate been kind to you?"

"Sir, only for him and the big boys I couldn't stay in the school, on account of the master's cruelty, particularly since my money was out."

"You are better now—are you not?" said the other gentleman.

"Thank God, Sir!—oh, thanks be to the Almighty, I am! I expect to be able to lave this place to-day or to-morrow."

"And where do you intend to go when you recover?"

The boy himself had not thought of this, and the question came on him so unexpectedly, that he could only reply—

"Indeed, Sir, I don't know."

"Had you," inquired the second stranger, "testimonials from your parish priest?"

"I had, Sir: they are in the hands of Mr. O'Brien. I also had a character from my father's landlord."

"But how," asked the other, "have you existed here during your illness? Have you been long sick?"

"Indeed I can't tell you, Sir, for I don't know how the time passed at all; but I know, Sir, that there were always two or three people attendin' me. They sent me whatever they thought I wanted, upon a shovel or a pitchfork, across the ditch, because they were afraid to come near me."

During the early part of the dialogue, two or three old hats, or caubeens, might have been seen moving steadily over from the wigwam to the ditch which ran beside the shed occupied by M'Evoy. Here they remained stationary, for those who wore them were now within hearing of the conversation, and ready to give their convalescent patient a good word, should it be necessary.

"How were you supplied with drink and medicine?" asked the younger stranger.

"As I've just told you, Sir," replied Jemmy, "the neighbours here let me want for nothing that they had. They kept me in more whey than I could use; and they got me medicine, too, some way or other. But indeed, Sir, during a great part of the time I was ill, I can't say how they attended me: I wasn't sensible, Sir, of what was goin' on about me."

One of those who lay behind the ditch now arose, and after a few hems and scratchings of the head, ventured to join in the conversation.

"Pray have you, my man," said the elder of the two, "been acquainted with the circumstances of this boy's illness?"

"Is it the poor scholar, my Lord?[48] Oh thin bedad it's myself that has that. The poor crathur was in a terrible way all out, so he was. He caught the faver in the school beyant, one day, an' was turned out by the nager o' the world that he was larnin' from."

"Are you one of the persons who attended him?"

"Och, och, the crathur! what could unsignified people like us do for him, barrin' a thrifle? Any how, my Lord, it's the meracle o' the world that he was ever able to *over* it at all. Why, Sir, good luck to the one of him but suffered as much, wid the help o' God, as 'ud overcome fifty men!"

"How did you provide him with drink at such a distance from any human habitation?"

"Throth, hard enough we found it, Sir, to do that same: but sure, whether or not, my Lord, we couldn't be sich nagers as to let him die all out, for want o' somethin' to moisten his throath wid."

"I hope," inquired the other, "you had nothing to do in the milk-stealing which has produced such an outcry in this immediate neighbourhood?"

"Milk-stalin'! Oh, bedad, Sir, there never was the likes known afore in the counthry. *The*

Lord forgive them that did it! Be gorra, Sir, the wickedness o' the people's mighty improvin', if one 'ud take warnin' by it, glory be to God!"

"Many of the farmers' cows have been milked at night, Connor—perfectly drained. Even my own cows have not escaped; and we who have suffered are certainly determined, if possible, to ascertain those who have committed the theft. I, for my part, have gone even beyond my ability in relieving the wants of the poor, during this period of sickness and famine; I therefore deserved this the less."

"By the powdhers, your honour, if any gintleman desarved to have his cows *unmilked,* it's yourself. But, as I said this minute, there's no end to the wickedness o' the people, so there's not, although the Catechiz is against them; for, says it, 'there is but one Faith, one Church, an' one Baptism.' Now, Sir, isn't it quare that people, wid sich words in the book afore them, won't be guided by it? I suppose they thought it only a *white* sin, Sir, to take the milk, the thieves o' the world."

"Maybe, your honour," said another, "that it was only to keep the life in some poor sick crathur that wanted it more nor you or the farmers, that they did it. There's some o' the same farmers desarve worse, for they're keepin' up the prices o' their male an' praties upon the poor, an' did so all along, that they might make money by our outher distitution."

"That is no justification for theft," observed the graver of the two. "Does any one among

you suspect those who committed it in this instance? If you do, I command you, as your Bishop, to mention them."

"How, for instance," added the other, "were you able to supply this sick boy with whey during his illness?"

"Oh thin, gintlemen," replied Connor, dexterously parrying the question, "but it's a mighty improvin' thing to see our own Bishop, —God spare his Lordship to us!—an' the Protestant minister o' the parish joinin' together to relieve an' give good advice to the poor! Bedad it's settin' a fine example, so it is, to the Quality, if they'd take patthern by it."

"Reply," said the Bishop, rather sternly, "to the questions we have asked you."

"The quistions, your Lordship? It's proud an' happy we'd be to do what you want; but the sarra man among us *can* do it, barrin' we'd say what we *ought not* to say. That's the thruth, my Lord; an' surely 'tisn't your Gracious Reverence that 'ud want us to go beyant *that?*"

"Certainly not," replied the Bishop. "I warn you against both falsehood and fraud; two charges which might frequently be brought against you in your intercourse with the gentry of the country, whom you seldom scruple to deceive and mislead, by gliding into a character, when speaking to them, that is often the reverse of your real one; whilst, at the same time, you are both honest and sincere to persons of your own class. Put away this practice, for it is both sinful and discreditable."

"God bless your Lordship! an' many thanks to your Gracious Reverence for advisin' us! Well we know that it's the blessed thing to folly your words."

"Bring over that naked, starved-looking man, who is stirring the fire under that pot," said the Rector. "He looks like Famine itself."

"Paddy Dunn! will you come over here to his honour, Paddy! He's goin' to give you somethin'," said Connor, adding of his own accord the last clause of the message.

The tattered creature approached him with a gleam of expectation in his eyes that appeared like insanity.

"God bless your honour for your goodness!" exclaimed Paddy. "It's me that's in it, Sir!—Paddy Dunn, Sir, sure enough; but, indeed, I'm the next thing to my own ghost, Sir, now, God help me!"

"What, and for whom, are you cooking?"

"Jist the smallest dhrop in life, Sir, o' gruel, to keep the sowl in that lonely crathur, Sir, the poor scholar."

"Pray how long is it since you have eaten anything yourself?"

The tears burst from the eyes of the miserable creature as he replied—

"Before God in glory, your honour, an' in the presence of his Lordship here, I only got about what 'ud make betther nor half a male widin the last day, Sir. 'Twas a weeshy grain o' male that I got from a friend; an' as Ned Connor here tould me that this crathur had

nothin' to make the gruel for him, why I shared it wid him, bekase he couldn't even beg it, Sir, if he wanted it, an' him not able to walk yit."

The worthy pastor's eyes glistened with a moisture that did him honour. Without a word of observation he slipped a crown into the hand of Dunn, who looked at it as if he had been paralysed.

"Oh thin," said he, fervently, "may every hair on your honour's head become a mould-candle to light you into glory! The world's goodness is in your heart, Sir; and may all the blessin's of Heaven rain down upon you an' yours!"

The two gentlemen then gave assistance to the poor scholar, whom the Bishop addressed in kind and encouraging language:—

"Come to me, my good boy," he added, "and if, on further inquiry, I find that your conduct has been such as I believe it to have been, you may rest assured, provided also you *continue* worthy of my good opinion, that I shall be a friend and a protector to you. Call on me when you get well, and I will speak to you at greater length."

"Well," observed Connor, when they were gone, "the divil's own hard puzzle the Bishop had me in, about stalin' the milk. It wint agin the grain wid me to tell *him* the lie, so I had to invint a bit o' truth to keep my conscience clear; for sure there was *not* a man among us that *could* tell him, barrin' we said what we *oughtn't* to say. Doesn't all the world know

that a man oughtn't *to condimn himself?* That was *thruth,* any way; but divil a scruple I'd have in *bammin'* the other—not but that he's one o' the best of his sort. Paddy Dunn, quit lookin' at that crown, but get the shovel an' give the boy his dhrink—he's wantin' it."

The agitation of spirits produced by Jemmy's cheering interview with the Bishop was, for two or three days afterwards, somewhat prejudicial to his convalescence. In less than a week, however, he was comfortably settled with Mr. O'-Rorke's family, whose kindness proved to him quite as warm as he had expected.

When he had remained with them a few days, he resolved to recommence his studies under his tyrant master. He certainly knew that his future attendance at the school would be penal to him, but he had always looked forward to the accomplishment of his hopes as a task of difficulty and distress. The severity to be expected from the master could not, he thought, be greater than that which he had already suffered; he therefore decided, if possible, to complete his education under him.

The school, when Jemmy appeared in it, had been for more than an hour assembled, but the thinness of the attendance not only proved the woful prevalence of sickness and distress in the parish, but sharpened the pedagogue's vinegar aspect into an expression of countenance singularly peevish and gloomy. When the lad entered, a murmur of pleasure and

welcome ran through the scholars, and joy beamed forth from every countenance but that of his teacher. When the latter noticed this, his irritability rose above restraint, and he exclaimed—

"Silence! and apply to business, or I shall cause some of you to denude immediately. No school ever can prosper in which that *hirudo,* called a poor scholar, is permitted toleration. I thought, sarrah, I told you to nidificate and hatch your wild project undher some other wing than mine."

"I only entrate you," replied our poor hero, "to suffer me to join the class I left while I was sick, for about another year. I'll be very quiet and humble, and, as far as I can, will do everything you wish me."

"Ah! you are a crawling reptile," replied the savage, "and, in my opinion, nothing but a chate and impostor. I think you have imposed yourself upon Mr. O'Brien for what you are not; that is, the son of an honest man. I have no doubt but many of your nearest relations died after having seen their own funerals. Your mother, you runagate, wasn't your father's wife, I'll be bail."

The spirit of the boy could bear this no longer; his eyes flashed, and his sinews stood out in the energy of deep indignation.

"It is false," he exclaimed; "it is as false as your own cruel and cowardly heart, you wicked and unprincipled tyrant! In everything

you have said of my father, mother, and friends, and of myself, too, you are a liar, from the hat on your head to the dirt undher your feet—a liar, a coward, and a villain!"

The fury of the miscreant was ungovernable: he ran at the still feeble lad, and, by a stroke of his fist, dashed him senseless to the earth. There were now no large boys in the school to curb his resentment, he therefore kicked him in the back when he fell. Many voices exclaimed in alarm—"Oh, masther! Sir! don't kill him! Oh, Sir! dear, don't kill him! Don't kill poor Jemmy, Sir, an' him still sick!"

"Kill him!" replied the master; "kill him, indeed! Faith, he'd be no common man who could kill him; he has as many lives in him as a cat! Sure, he can live behind a ditch, wid the faver on his back, widout dying; and he would live if he was stuck on the spire of a steeple."

In the mean time the boy gave no symptoms of returning life, and the master, after desiring a few of the scholars to bring him out to the air, became pale as death with apprehension. He immediately withdrew to his private apartment, which joined the school-room, and sent out his wife to assist in restoring him to animation. With some difficulty this was accomplished. The unhappy boy at once remembered what had just occurred; and the bitter tears gushed from his eyes, as he knelt down, and exclaimed, "Merciful Father of heaven and earth, have

pity on me! You see my heart, great God! and that what I did, I did for the best!"

"Avourneen," said the woman, "he's passionate, an' never mind him. Come in an' beg his pardon for callin' him a liar, an' I'll become spokesman for you myself. Come, acushla, an' I'll get lave for you to stay in the school still."

"Oh, I'm hurted!" said the poor youth: "I'm hurted inwardly—somewhere about the back, and about my ribs!" The pain he felt brought the tears down his pale cheeks. "I wish I was at home!" said he. "I'll give up all and go home!" The lonely boy then laid his head upon his hands, as he sat on the ground, and indulged in a long burst of sorrow.

"Well," said a manly-looking little fellow, whilst the tears stood in his eyes, "I'll tell my father this, any how. I know he won't let me come to this school any more. Here, Jemmy, is a piece of my bread, maybe it will do you good."

"I couldn't taste it, Frank dear," said Jemmy; "God bless you! but I couldn't taste it."

"Do," said Frank; "maybe it will bate back the pain."

"Don't ask me, Frank dear," said Jemmy; "I couldn't ate it: I'm hurted inwardly."

"Bad luck to me!" exclaimed the indignant boy, "if ever my ten toes will darken this school door agin. By the livin' farmer, if they ax me at home to do it, I'll run away to my uncle's, so I will. Wait, Jemmy, I'll be big yit; an', be the

blessed Gospel that's about my neck, I'll give the same masther a shirtful of sore bones, the holy an' blessed minute I'm able to do it."

Many of the other boys declared that they would acquaint their friends with the master's cruelty to the poor scholar; but Jemmy requested them not to do so, and said that he was determined to return home the moment he should be able to travel.

The affrighted woman could not prevail upon him to seek a reconciliation with her husband, although the expressions of the other scholars induced her to press him to it, even to entreaty. Jemmy arose, and with considerable difficulty reached the Curate's house, found him at home and, with tears in his eyes, related to him the atrocious conduct of the master.

"Very well," said this excellent man, "I am glad that I can venture to ride as far as Colonel B——s to-morrow. You must accompany me; for decidedly such brutality cannot be permitted to go unpunished."

Jemmy knew that the Curate was his friend; and although he would not himself have thought of summoning the master to answer for his barbarity, yet he acquiesced in the curate's opinion. He stopped that night in the house of the worthy man to whom Mr. O'Brien had recommended him on his first entering the town. It appeared in the morning, however, that he was unable to walk; the blows which he had received were *then* felt by him to be more dangerous than had been supposed. Mr. O'Brien, on being informed of

this, procured a jaunting-car, on which they both sat, and, at an easy pace, reached the Colonel's residence.

The Curate was shown into an ante-room, and Jemmy sat in the hall: the Colonel joined the former in a few minutes. He had been in England and on the Continent, accompanied by his family, for nearly the last three years, but had just returned, in order to take possession of a large property in land and money, to which he succeeded at a very critical moment, for his own estates were heavily encumbered. He was now proprietor of an additional estate, the rent-roll of which was six thousand per annum, and also master of eighty-five thousand pounds in the funds.

Mr. O'Brien, after congratulating him upon his good fortune, introduced the case of our hero as one which, in his opinion, called for the Colonel's interposition as a magistrate.

"I have applied to you, Sir," he proceeded, "rather than to any other of the neighbouring gentlemen, because I think this friendless lad has a peculiar claim upon any good offices you could render him."

"A claim upon me! How is that, Mr. O'Brien?"

"The boy, Sir, is not a native of this province. His father was formerly a tenant of yours, a man, as I have reason to believe, remarkable for good conduct and industry. It appears that his circumstances, so long as he was your tenant, were those of a comfortable independent farmer.

If the story which his son relates be true—and I, for one, believe it—his family have been dealt with in a manner unusually cruel and iniquitous. Your present agent, Colonel, who is known in his own neighbourhood by the nickname of *Yellow Sam,* thrust him out of his farm, when his wife was sick, for the purpose of putting into it a man who had married his illegitimate daughter. If this be found a correct account of the transaction, I have no hesitation in saying, that you, Colonel B——, as a gentleman of honour and humanity, will investigate the conduct of your agent, and see justice done to an honest man, who must have been oppressed in your name, and under colour of your authority."

"If my agent has dared to be unjust to a worthy tenant," said the Colonel, "in order to provide for his bastard, by my sacred honour, he shall cease to be an agent of mine! I admit, certainly, that from some circumstances which transpired a few years ago, I have reason to suspect his integrity. That, to be sure, was only so far as he and I were concerned; but, on the other hand, during one or two visits I made to the estate which he manages, I heard the tenants thank and praise him with much gratitude, and all that sort of thing. There was 'Thank your honour!'—'Long may you reign over us, Sir!'—and, 'Oh, Colonel, you've a mighty good man to your agent!' and so forth. I do not think, Mr. O'Brien, that he has acted so harshly, or that he would dare to do it. Upon my honour,

I heard those warm expressions of gratitude from the lips of the tenants themselves."

"If you knew the people in general, Colonel, so well as I do," replied the Curate, "you would admit, that such expressions are often either cuttingly ironical, or the result of fear. You will always find, Sir, that the independent portion of the people have least of this forced dissimulation among them. A dishonest and inhuman agent has in his own hands the irresponsible power of harassing and oppressing the tenantry under him. The class most hateful to the people, are those low wretches who spring up from nothing into wealth, accumulated by dishonesty and rapacity. They are proud, overbearing, and jealous, even to vindictiveness, of the least want of respect. It is to such upstarts that the poorer classes are externally most civil; but it is also such persons whom they most hate and abhor. They flatter them to their faces, 'tis true, even to *nausea;* but they seldom spare them in their absence. Of this very class, I believe, is your agent, Yellow Sam; so that any favourable expressions you may have heard from your tenantry towards him, were most probably the result of dissimulation and fear. Besides, Sir, here is a testimonial from M'Evoy's parish-priest, in which his father is spoken of as an honest, moral, and industrious man."

"If what you say, Mr. O'Brien, be correct," observed the Colonel, "you know the Irish peasantry much better than I do. Decidedly, I

have always thought them in conversation exceedingly candid and sincere. With respect to testimonials from priests to landlords in behalf of their tenants, upon my honour I am sick of them. I actually received, about four years ago, such an excellent character of two tenants, as induced me to suppose them worthy of encouragement. But what was the fact? Why, Sir, they were two of the greatest firebrands on my estate, and put both me and my agent to great trouble and expense. No, Sir, I wouldn't give a curse for a priest's testimonial upon such an occasion. These fellows were subsequently convicted of arson on the clearest evidence, and transported."

"Well, Sir, I grant that you may have been misled in that instance. However, from what I've observed, the two great faults of Irish landlords are these:—In the first place, they suffer themselves to remain ignorant of their tenantry; so much so, indeed, that they frequently deny them access and redress when the poor people are anxious to acquaint them with their grievances; for it is usual with landlords to refer them to those very agents against whose cruelty and rapacity they are appealing. This is a *carte blanche* to the agent to trample upon them if he pleases. In the next place, Irish landlords too frequently employ ignorant and needy men to manage their estates; men who have no character, no property, or standing in society, beyond the reputation of being keen, shrewd, and active. These

persons, Sir, make fortunes; and what means can they have of accumulating wealth, except by cheating either the landlord or his tenants, or both? A history of their conduct would be a black catalogue of dishonesty, oppression, and treachery. Respectable men, resident on or near the estate, possessing both character and property, should always be selected for this important trust. But, above all things, the curse of a tenantry is a *per-centage* agent. He racks, and drives, and oppresses, without consideration either of market or produce, in order that his receipts may be ample, and his own income large."

"Why, O'Brien, you appear to be better acquainted with all this sort of thing than I, who am a landed proprietor."

"By the by, Sir, without meaning you any disrespect, it is the landlords of Ireland who know least about the great mass of its inhabitants; and I might also add, about its history, its literature, the manners of the people, their customs, and their prejudices. The peasantry know this, and too often practise upon their ignorance. There is a landlord's *Vade mecum* sadly wanted in Ireland, Colonel."

"Ah! very good, O'Brien, very good! Well, I shall certainly inquire into this case, and if I find that Yellow Sam has been playing the oppressor, out he goes. I am now able to manage him, which I could not readily do before, for, by the by, he had mortgages on my property."

"I would take it, Colonel, as a personal favour, if you would investigate the transaction I have mentioned."

"Undoubtedly I shall, and that very soon. But about this outrage committed against the boy himself? We had better take his informations, and punish the fellow."

"Certainly; I think that is the best way. His conduct to the poor youth has been merciless and detestable. We must put him out of this part of the country."

"Call the lad in. In this case I shall draw up the informations myself, although Gregg usually does that."

Jemmy, assisted by the Curate, entered the room, and the humane Colonel desired him, as he appeared ill, to sit down.

"What is your name?" asked the Colonel.

"James M'Evoy," he replied. "I'm the son, Sir, of a man who was once a tenant of yours."

"Ah! and pray how did he cease to be a tenant of mine?"

"Why, Sir, your agent, Yallow Sam, put him out of our farm, when my poor mother was on her sick-bed. He chated my father, Sir, out of some money—part of our rent it was, that he didn't give him a receipt for. When my father went to him afterwards for the receipt, Yallow Sam abused him, and called him a rogue, and that, Sir, was what no man ever called my father either before or since. My father, Sir, threatened to tell you about it, and you came to the country soon after; but Yallow Sam got

very great wid my father at that time, and sent him to sell bullocks for him about fifty miles off, but when he come back again you had left the country. Thin, Sir, Yallow Sam said nothing till the next half-year's rent became due, whin he came down on my father for all—that is, what he hadn't got the receipt for, and the other gale—and, without any warning in the world, put him out. My father offered to pay all; but he said he was a rogue, and that you had ordered him off the estate. In less than a week after this he put a man that married a bastard daughter of his own into our house and place. That's God's truth, Sir; and you'll find it so, if you inquire into it. It's a common trick of his to keep back receipts, and make the tenants pay double." [49]

"Sacred Heaven, O'Brien! can this be possible?"

"Your best way, Colonel, is to inquire into it."

"Was not your father able to educate you at home, my boy?"

"No, Sir. We soon got into poverty after we left your farm; and another thing, Sir, there was no Latin school in our neighbourhood."

"For what purpose did you become a poor scholar?"

"Why, Sir, I hoped one day or other to be able to raise my father and mother out of the distress that Yallow Sam brought on us."

"By Heaven! a noble aim, and a noble sentiment. And what has this d—d fellow of a schoolmaster done to you?"

"Why, Sir, yesterday when I went back to the school, he abused me, and said that he supposed most of my relations were hanged; spoke ill of my father, and said that my mother"—Here the tears started to his eyes—he sobbed aloud.

"Go on, and be cool," said the Colonel. "What did he say of your mother?"

"He said, Sir, that she was never married to my father. I know I was wrong, Sir; but if it was the king on his throne that said it of my mother, I'd call him a liar. I called *him* a liar, and a coward, and a villain; ay, Sir, and if I had been able, I would have tramped him under my feet."

The Colonel looked steadily at him, but the open clear eye which the boy turned upon him was full of truth and independence.

"And you will find," said the soldier, "that this spirited defence of your mother will be the most fortunate action of your life. Well; he struck you then, did he?"

"He knocked me down, Sir, with his fist—then kicked me in the back and sides. I think some of my ribs are broke."

"Ay!—no doubt, no doubt," said the Colonel. "And you were only after recovering from this fever which is so prevalent?"

"I wasn't a week out of it, Sir."

"Well, my boy, we shall punish him for you."

"Sir, would you hear me for a word or two, if it would be pleasing to you?"

"Speak on," said the Colonel.

"I would rather change his punishment to—

I would—that is—if it would be agreeable to you—It's this, Sir—I wouldn't throuble you now against the master, if you'd be pleased to rightify my father, and punish Yallow Sam. Oh, Sir, for God's sake, put my heart-broken father into his farm again! If you would, Sir, I could shed my blood, or lay down my life for you, or for any belonging to you. I'm but a poor boy, Sir, low and humble; but they say there's a greater Being than the greatest in this world, that listens to the just prayers of the poor and friendless. I was never happy, Sir, since we left it—neither was any of us; and when we'd sit cowld and hungry, about our hearth, we used to be talking of the pleasant days we spent in it, till the tears would be smothered in curses against him that put us out of it. Oh, Sir, if you could know all that a poor and honest family suffers, when they are thrown into distress by want of feeling in their landlords, or by the dishonesty of agents, you would consider my father's case. I'm his favourite son, Sir, and good right have I to speak for him. If you could know the sorrow, the misery, the drooping down of the spirits, that lies upon the countenances and the hearts of such people, you wouldn't, as a man and a Christian, think it below you to spread happiness and contentment among them again. In the morning they rise to a day of hardship, no matter how bright and cheerful it may be to others—nor is there any hope of a brighter day for *them;* and at night they go to their hard beds to strive to sleep away

"Now," said he, "your father has been treated inhumanly, I believe; but no matter. That is not the question. Your sentiments, and conduct, and your affection for your parents, are noble, my boy. At present, I say, the question is not whether the history of your father's wrongs be true or false; you, at least, *believe* it to be true. From this forward—but by the by, I forgot; how could your becoming a poor scholar relieve your parents?"

"I intended to become a priest, Sir, and then to help them."

"Ay! so I thought; and, provided your father were restored to his farm, would you be still disposed to become a priest?"

"I would, Sir; next to helping my father, that is what I wish to be."

"O'Brien, what would it cost to prepare him respectably for the priesthood?—I mean, to defray his expenses until he completes his preparatory education, in the first place, and afterwards during his residence in Maynooth?"

"I think two hundred pounds, Sir, would do it easily and respectably."

"I do not think it would. However, do you send him—but first let me ask what progress he has already made?"

"He has read—in fact he *is* nearly prepared to enter Maynooth. His progress has been very rapid."

"Put him to some respectable boarding-school for a year; then let him enter Maynooth, and I will bear the expense. But remember I

do not adopt this course in consequence of his father's history. Not I, by Jupiter; I do it on his own account. He is a noble boy, and full of fine qualities, if they be not nipped by neglect and poverty. I loved my father myself, and fought a duel on his account; and I honour the son who has spirit to defend his absent parent."

"This is a most surprising turn in the boy's fortunes, Colonel."

"He deserves it. A soldier, Mr. O'Brien, is not without his enthusiasm, nor can he help admiring it in others, when nobly and virtuously directed. To see a boy in the midst of poverty, encountering the hardships and difficulties of life, with the hope of raising up his parents from distress to independence, has a touch of sublimity in it."

"Ireland, Colonel, abounds with instances of similar virtue, brought out, probably, into fuller life and vigour by the sad changes and depressions which are weighing down the people. In her glens, on her bleak mountain sides, and in her remotest plains, such examples of pure affection, uncommon energy, and humble heroism, are to be seen; but, unfortunately, few persons of rank or observation mingle with the Irish people, and their many admirable qualities pass away without being recorded in the literature of their country. They are certainly a strange people, Colonel, almost an anomaly in the history of the human race. They are the only people who can rush out from the very virtues of private life to the perpetration of crimes at which we

shudder. There is, to be sure, an outcry about their oppression; but that is wrong. Their indigence and ignorance are rather the result of neglect;—of neglect, Sir, from the government of the country—from the earl to the squireen. They have been taught little that is suitable to their stations and duties in life, either as tenants who cultivate our lands, or as members of moral or Christian society."

"Well, well: I believe what you say is too true. But touching the records of virtue in humble life, pray who would record it when nothing goes down now-a-days but what is either monstrous or fashionable?"

"Very true, Colonel; yet in my humble opinion, a virtuous Irish peasant is far from being so low a character as a profligate man of rank."

"Well, well, well! Come, O'Brien, we will drop the subject. In the meantime, touching this boy, as I said, he must be looked to, for he has that in him which ought not to be neglected. We shall now see that this d—d pedagogue be punished for his cruelty."

The worthy Colonel in a short time dismissed poor Jemmy with an exulting heart; but not until he had placed a sufficient sum in the Curate's hands for enabling him to make a respectable appearance. Medical advice was also procured for him, by which he sooner overcame the effects of his master's brutality.

On their way home Jemmy related to his friend the conversation which he had had with his Bishop in the shed, and the kind interest which

that gentleman had taken in his situation and prospects. Mr. O'Brien told him that the Bishop was an excellent man, possessing much discrimination and benevolence; "and so," said he, "is the Protestant clergyman who accompanied him. They have both gone among the people during this heavy visitation of disease and famine, administering advice and assistance; restraining them from those excesses which they sometimes commit, when, driven by hunger, they attack provision-carts, bakers' shops, or the houses of farmers who are known to possess a stock of meal or potatoes. God knows, it is an excusable kind of robbery; yet it is right to restrain them."

"It is a pleasant thing, Sir, to see clergymen of every religion working together to make the people happy."

"It is certainly so," replied the Curate; "and I am bound to say, in justice to the Protestant clergy, that there is no class of men in Ireland, James, who do *so much* good without distinction of creed or party. They are generally kind and charitable to the poor; so are their wives and daughters. I have often known them to cheer the sick-bed—to assist the widow and the orphan—to advise and admonish the profligate, and, in some instances, even to reclaim them. But now about your own prospects; I think you should go and see your family as soon as your health permits you."

"I would give my right hand," replied Jemmy, "just to see them, if it was only for five

minutes: but I cannot go. I vowed that I would never enter my native parish until I should become a Catholic clergyman. I vowed that, Sir, to God—and with his assistance I will keep my vow."

"Well," said the curate, "you are right. And now let me give you a little advice. In the first place, learn to speak as correctly as you can; lay aside the vulgarisms of conversation peculiar to the common people; and speak precisely as you would write. By the by, you acquitted yourself to admiration with the Colonel. A little stumbling there was in the beginning; but you got over it. You see, James, the force of truth and simplicity. I could scarcely restrain my tears while you spoke."

"If I had not been in earnest, Sir, I could never have spoken as I did."

"You never could. Truth, James, is the foundation of all eloquence; he who knowingly speaks what is not true, may dazzle and perplex; but he will never touch with that power and pathos which spring from truth. Fiction is successful only by borrowing her habiliments. Now, James, for a little more advice. Don't let the idea of having been a poor scholar deprive you of self-respect; neither let your unexpected turn of fortune cause you to forget what you have suffered. Hold a middle course; be firm and independent; without servility on the one hand, or vanity on the other. You have also too much good sense, and, I hope, too much religion, to ascribe what this day has brought forth in

your behalf, to any other cause than God. It has pleased him to raise you from misery to ease and comfort; to him, therefore, be it referred, and to him be your thanks and prayers directed. You owe him much, for you now can perceive the value of what he has done for you! May his name be blessed!"

Jemmy was deeply affected by the kindness of his friend, for such, in friendship's truest sense, was he to him. He expressed the obligations which he owed him, and promised to follow the excellent advice he had just received.

The schoolmaster's conduct to the poor scholar had, before the close of the day on which it occurred, been known through the parish. Thady O'Rorke, who had but just recovered from the epidemic, felt so bitterly exasperated at the outrage, that he brought his father to the parish priest, to whom he gave a detailed account of all that our hero and the poorer children of the school had suffered. In addition to this, he went among the more substantial farmers of the neighbourhood, whose co-operation he succeeded in obtaining, for the laudable purpose of driving the tyrant out of the parish.

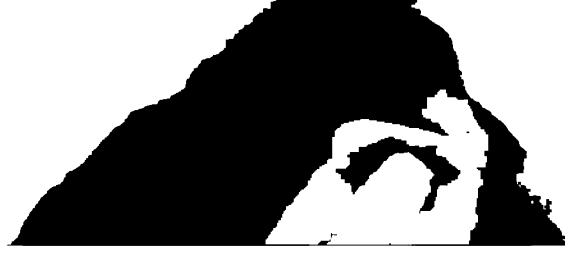
Jemmy, who still lived at the "House of Entertainment," on hearing what they intended to do, begged Mr. O'Brien to allow him, provided the master should be removed from the school to decline prosecuting him.

"He has been cruel to me, no doubt," he added; "still I cannot forget that his cruelty has been the means of changing my condition in

life so much for the better. If he is put out of the parish it will be punishment enough; and, to say the truth, Sir, I can *now* forgive everybody. Maybe, had I been still *neglected* I might punish him; but, in the meantime, to show him and the world that I didn't deserve his severity, I forgive him."

Mr. O'Brien was not disposed to check a sentiment that did the boy's heart so much honour; he waited on the Colonel the next morning, acquainted him with Jemmy's wishes, and the indictment was quashed immediately after the schoolmaster's removal from his situation.

Our hero's personal appearance was by this time incredibly changed for the better. His countenance, naturally expressive of feeling, firmness, and intellect, now appeared to additional advantage; so did his whole person, when dressed in a decent suit of black. No man acquainted with life can be ignorant of the improvement which genteel apparel produces in the carriage, tone of thought, and principles of an individual. It gives a man confidence, self-respect, and a sense of equality with his companions; it inspires him with energy, independence, delicacy of sentiment, courtesy of manner, and elevation of language. The face becomes manly, bold, and free; the brow open, and the eye clear; there is no slinking through narrow lanes and back streets: but, on the contrary, the smoothly dressed man steps out with a determination not to spare the earth, or to walk as if he trod on eggs. No; he brushes on-



ward; is the first to accost his friends; gives a careless bow to this, a bluff nod to that, and a patronising "how d'ye do" to a third, who is worse dressed than himself. Trust me, kind reader, that good clothes are calculated to advance a man in life nearly as well as good principles, especially in a world like this, where external appearance is taken as the exponent of what is beneath it.

Jemmy, by the advice of his friend, now waited upon the Bishop, who was much surprised at the uncommon turn of fortune which had taken place in his favour. He also expressed his willingness to help him forward, as far as lay in his power, towards the attainment of his wishes. In order to place the boy directly under suitable patronage, Mr. O'Brien suggested that the choice of the school should be left to the Bishop. This, perhaps, flattered him a little, for who is without his weaknesses? A school near the metropolis was accordingly fixed upon, to which Jemmy, now furnished with a handsome outfit, was accordingly sent. There we will leave him, reading with eagerness and assiduity, whilst we return to look after Colonel B. and his agent.

One morning after James's departure, the Colonel's servant waited upon Mr. O'Brien with a note from his master, intimating a wish to see him. He lost no time in waiting upon that gentleman, who was then preparing to visit the estate which he had so long neglected.

"I am going," said he, "to see how my agent,

Yellow Sam, as they call him, and my tenants agree. It is my determination, Mr. O'Brien, to investigate the circumstances attending the removal of our *protégé's* father. I shall, moreover, look closely into the state and feelings of my tenants in general. It is probable I shall visit many of them, and certain that I will inquire into the character of this man."

"It is better late than never, Colonel; but still, though I am a friend to the people, yet I would recommend you to be guided by great caution, and the evidence of respectable and disinterested men only. You must not certainly entertain all the complaints you may hear, without clear proof, for I regret to say, that too many of the idle and political portion of the peasantry are apt to throw the blame of their own folly and ignorance—yes, and of their crimes, also—upon those who in no way have occasioned either their poverty or their wickedness. They are frequently apt to consider themselves oppressed, if concessions are not made, to which they, as idle and indolent men, who neglect their own business, have no fair claim. Bear this in mind, Colonel—be cool, use discrimination, take your proofs from others besides the parties concerned, or their friends, and, depend upon it, you will arrive at the truth."

"O'Brien, you would make an excellent agent."

"I have studied the people, Sir, and know them. I have breathed the atmosphere of their prejudices, habits, manners, customs, and super-

stitions. I have felt them all myself, as they feel them; but I trust I have got above their influence where it is evil, for there are many fine touches of character among them, which I should not willingly part with. No, Sir, I should make a bad agent, having no capacity for transacting business. I could direct and overlook, but nothing more."

"Well, then, I shall set out to-morrow; and in the meantime, permit me to say that I am deeply sensible of your kindness in pointing out my duty as an Irish landlord, conscious that I have too long neglected it."

"Kindness, Colonel, is the way to the Irish heart. There is but one man in Ireland who can make an Irishman ungrateful, and that is his priest. I regret that in times of political excitement, and especially during electioneering struggles, the interference of the clergy produces disastrous effects upon the moral feelings of the people. When a tenant meets the landlord whom he has deserted in the critical moment of the contest—the landlord to whom he has solemnly promised his support, and who, perhaps, as a member of the legislature, has advocated his claims and his rights, and who, probably, has been kind and indulgent to him —I say, when he meets him afterwards, his shufflings, excuses, and evasions are grievous. He is driven to falsehood and dissimulation in explaining his conduct; he expresses his repentance, curses himself for his ingratitude, promises well for the future, but seldom or never can be

prevailed upon to state candidly that he acted in obedience to the priest. In some instances, however, he admits this, and inveighs bitterly against his interference—but this is only whilst in the presence of his landlord. I think, Colonel, that no clergyman, set apart as he is for the concerns of a better world, should become a firebrand in the secular pursuits and turmoils of this."

"I wish, Mr. O'Brien, that every clergyman of your church resembled you, and acted up to your sentiments: our common country would be the better for it."

"I endeavour to act, Sir, as a man who has purely spiritual duties to perform. It is not for us to be agitated and inflamed by the political passions and animosities of the world. Our lot is differently cast, and we ought to abide by it. The priest and politician can no more agree than good and evil. I speak with respect to *all* churches."

"And so do I."

"What stay do you intend to make, Colonel?"

"I think about a month. I shall visit some of my old friends there, from whom I expect a history of the state and feelings of the country."

"You will hear both sides of the question before you act?"

"Certainly. I have written to my agent to say that I shall look very closely into my own

affairs on *this* occasion. I thought it fair to give him notice."

"Well, Sir, I wish you all success."

"Farewell, Mr. O'Brien; I shall see you immediately after my return."

The Colonel performed his journey by slow stages, until he reached "the hall of his fathers," —for it was such, although he had not for years resided in it. It presented the wreck of a fine old mansion, situated within a crescent of stately beeches, whose moss-covered and ragged trunks gave symptons of decay and neglect. The lawn had been once beautiful, and the demesne a noble one; but that which blights the industry of the tenant—the curse of absenteeism —had also left the marks of ruin stamped upon every object around him. The lawn was little better than a common; the pond was thick with weeds and sluggish water-plants, that almost covered its surface; and a light elegant bridge, that spanned a river which ran before the house, was also moss-grown and dilapidated. The hedges were mixed up with briers, the gates broken, or altogether removed, the fields were rank with the ruinous luxuriance of weeds, and the grass-grown avenues spoke of solitude and desertion. The still appearance, too, of the house itself, and the absence of smoke from its time-tinged chimneys—all told a tale which constitutes one, perhaps the *greatest,* portion of Ireland's misery! Even then he did not approach it with the intention of residing there

during his sojourn in the country. It was not habitable, nor had it been so for years. The road by which he travelled lay near it, and he could not pass without looking upon the place where a long line of gallant ancestors had succeeded each other, lived their span, and disappeared in their turn.

He contemplated it for some time in a kind of reverie. There it stood, sombre and silent;—its gray walls mouldering away—its windows dark and broken;—like a man forsaken by the world, compelled to bear the storms of life without the hand of a friend to support him, though age and decay render him less capable of enduring them. For a moment fancy repeopled it;—again the stir of life, pastime, mirth, and hospitality echoed within its walls; the train of his long-departed relatives returned; the din of rude and boisterous enjoyment peculiar to the times; the cheerful tumult of the hall at dinner; the family feuds and festivities; the vanities and the passions of those who now slept in dust;—all—all came before him once more, and played their part in the vision of the moment!

As he walked on, the flitting wing of a bat struck him lightly in its flight; he awoke from the remembrances which crowded on him, and, resuming his journey, soon arrived at the inn of the nearest town, where he stopped that night. The next morning he saw his agent for a short time, but declined entering upon business. For a few days more he visited most of the neighbouring gentry, from whom he received suffi-

cient information to satisfy him, that neither he himself nor his agent was popular among his tenantry. Many flying reports of the agent's dishonesty and tyranny were mentioned to him, and in every instance he took down the names of the parties, in order to ascertain the truth. M'Evoy's case had occurred more than ten years before, but he found that the remembrance of the poor man's injury was strongly and bitterly retained in the recollections of the people—a circumstance which extorted from the blunt, but somewhat sentimental soldier, a just observation:—"I think," said he, "that there are no people in the world who remember either an injury or a kindness so long as the Irish."

When the tenants were apprised of his presence among them, they experienced no particular feeling upon the subject. During all his former visits to his estate, he appeared merely the creature and puppet of his agent, who never acted the bully, nor tricked himself out in his brief authority more imperiously than he did before him. The knowledge of this damped them, and rendered any expectations of redress or justice from the landlord a matter not to be thought of.

"If he wasn't so great a man," they observed, "who thinks it below him to speak to his tenants, or hear their complaints, there 'ud be some hope. But that rip of hell, Yallow Sam, can wind him round his finger like a thread, an' does, too. There's no use in thinkin' to petition him, or to lodge a complaint against Stony Heart,

for the first thing he'd do 'ud be to put it into the yallow boy's hands, an' thin, God be marciful to thim that 'ud complain. No, no; the best way is to wait till Sam's masther[50] takes him; an' who knows but that 'ud be sooner nor we think."

"They say," another would reply, "that the Colonel is a good gintleman for all that, an' that if he could *once* know the truth, he'd pitch the 'yallow boy' to the 'ould boy.'"

No sooner was it known by his tenantry that the head landlord was disposed to redress their grievances, and hear their complaints, than the smothered attachment, which long neglect had nearly extinguished, now burst forth with uncommon power.

"Augh! by this an' by that, the thrue blood's in him still. The rale gintleman to dale wid, for ever! We knew he only wanted to come at the thruth, an' thin he'd back us agin the villain that harrished us! To the divil wid skamin' upstarts, that hasn't the ould blood in thim! What are they but sconces an' chates, every one o' thim, barrin' an odd one, for a wondher!"

The Colonel's estate now presented a scene of gladness and bustle. Every person who felt in the slightest degree aggrieved, got his petition drawn up; and, but that we fear our sketch is already too long, we could gratify the reader's curiosity by submitting a few of them. It is sufficient to say, that they came to him in every shape—in all the variety of diction that the poor English language admits of—in the school-

master's best copy-hand, and choicest sesquipedalianism of pedantry—in the severer, but more Scriptural terms of the parish clerk—in the engrossing hand and legal phrase of the attorney—in the military form, evidently redolent of the shrewd old pensioner—and in the classical style of the young priest;—for each and all of the foregoing were enlisted in the cause of those who had petitions to send in "to the Colonel himself, God bless him!"

Early in the morning of the day on which the Colonel had resolved to compare the complaints of his tenantry with the character which his agent gave him of the complainants, he sent for the former, and the following dialogue took place between them.

"Good morning, Mr. Carson! Excuse me for requesting your presence to-day earlier than usual. I have taken it into my head to know something of my own tenantry, and as they have pestered me with petitions, and letters, and complaints, I am anxious to have your opinion, as you know them better than I do."

"Before we enter on business, Colonel, allow me to inquire if you feel relieved of that bilious attack you complained of the day before yesterday? I'm of a bilious habit myself, and know something about the management of digestion!"

"A good digestion is an excellent thing, Carson; as for me, I drank too much claret with my friend B——y; and there's the secret. I don't like cold wines, they never agree with me."

"Nor do I; they are not constitutional.

Your father was celebrated for his wines, Colonel: I remember an anecdote told me by Captain Ferguson—by the by, do you know where Ferguson could be found, now, Sir?"

"Not I. What wines do *you* drink, Carson?"

"A couple of glasses of sherry, Sir, at dinner; and about ten o'clock, a glass of brandy and water."

"Carson, you are sober and *prudent*. Well, about these cursed petitions; you must help me to dispose of them. Why, a man would think by the tenor of them, that these tenants of mine are ground to dust by a tyrant."

"Ah! Colonel, you know little about these fellows. They would make black white. Go and take a ride, Sir, return about four o'clock, and I will have everything as it ought to be."

"I wish to heaven, Carson, I had your talents for business. Do you think my tenants attached to me?"

"Attached! Sir, they are ready to cut your throat or mine, on the first convenient opportunity. You could not conceive their knavishness and dishonesty, except you happened to be an agent for a few years."

"So I have been told, and I am resolved to remove every dishonest tenant from my estate. Is there not a man, for instance, called Brady? He has sent me a long-winded petition here. What do you think of him?"

"Show me the petition, Colonel."

"I cannot lay my hand on it just now; but you shall see it. In the mean time what's your opinion of the fellow?"

"Brady! Why I know the man particularly well. He is one of my favourites. What the deuce could the fellow petition about, though? I promised the other day to renew his lease for him."

"Oh, then, if he be a favourite of yours, his petition may go to the devil, I suppose? Is the man honest?"

"Remarkably so; and has paid his rents very punctually. He is one of our safest tenants."

"Do you know a man called Cullen?"

"The most litigious scoundrel on the estate."

"Indeed! Oh, then, we must look into the merits of *his* petition, as he is *not* honest. Had he been honest like Brady, Carson, I should have dismissed it."

"Cullen, Sir, is a dangerous fellow. Do you know, that rascal has charged me with keeping back his receipts, and with making him pay double rent!—ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, it's fact."

"The scoundrel! We shall sift him to some purpose, however."

"If you take my advice, Sir, you will send him about his business; for if it be once known that you listen to malicious petitions, my authority over such villains as Cullen is lost."

"Well, I set him aside for the present. Here's a long list of others, all of whom have

been oppressed, forsooth. Is there a man called M'Evoy on my estate?—Dominick M'Evoy, I think."

"M'Evoy! Why that rascal, Sir, has not been your tenant for ten years! *His* petition, Colonel, is a key to the nature of their grievances in general."

"I believe you, Carson—most implicitly do I *believe* that. Well, about that rascal?"

"Why, it is so long since, that upon my honour, I cannot exactly remember the circumstances of his misconduct. He ran away."

"Who is in his farm now, Carson?"

"A very decent man, Sir. One Jackson, an exceedingly worthy, honest, industrious fellow. I take some credit to myself for bringing Jackson on your estate."

"Is Jackson married? Has he a family?"

"Married! Let me see! Why—yes—I *believe* he is. Oh, by the by, now I think of it, he *is* married, and to a very respectable woman, too. Certainly, I remember—she usually accompanies him when he pays his rents."

"Then your system must be a good one, Carson; you weed out the idle and profligate, to replace them by the honest and industrious?"

"Precisely so, Sir; that is my system."

"Yet there are agents who invert your system in some cases; who drive out the honest and industrious, and encourage the idle and profligate; who connive at them, Carson, and fill the estates they manage with their own dependents, or relatives, as the case may be. You have

been always opposed to this, and I'm glad to hear it."

"No man, Colonel B——, filling the situation which I have the honour to hold under you, could study your interests with greater zeal and assiduity. God knows, I have had so many quarrels, and feuds, and wranglings, with these fellows, in order to squeeze money out of them to meet your difficulties, that, upon my honour, I think if it required five dozen oaths to hang me, they could be procured upon your estate. An agent, Colonel, who is faithful to the landlord, is seldom popular with the tenants."

"I can't exactly see that, Carson; and I have known an unpopular landlord rendered highly popular by the judicious management of an enlightened and honest agent, who took no bribes, Carson, and who neither extorted from nor ground the tenantry under him—something like a counterpart of yourself. But you may be right in general."

"Is there anything particular, Colonel, in which I can assist you now?"

"Not now. I was anxious to hear the character of those fellows from you who know them. Come down about eleven or twelve o'clock; these petitioners will be assembled, and you may be able to assist me."

"Colonel, remember I forewarn you, that you are plunging into a mesh of difficulties, which you will never be able to disentangle. Leave the fellows to me, Sir; I know how to deal with them. Besides, upon my honour, you are not

equal to it, in point of health. You look ill. Pray allow me to take home their papers, and I shall have all clear and satisfactory before two o'clock. They know my method, Sir."

"They do, Carson, they *do;* but I am anxious they should also know *mine.* Besides, it will amuse me, for I want excitement. Good day, for the present; you will be down about twelve, or one at the farthest."

"Certainly, Sir. Good morning, Colonel."

The agent was too shrewd a man not to perceive that there were touches of cutting irony in some of the Colonel's expressions, which he did not like. There was a dryness, too, in the tone of his voice and words, blended with a copiousness of good humour, which, taken altogether, caused him to feel uncomfortable. He could have wished the Colonel at the devil; yet had the said Colonel never been more familiar in his life, nor, with one or two exceptions, readier to agree with almost every observation made to him.

"Well," thought he, "*he* may act as he pleases; *I* have feathered my nest, at all events, and disregard him."

Colonel B——, in fact, ascertained with extreme regret, that something was necessary to be done, to secure the good-will of his tenants; that the conduct of his agent had been marked by rapacity and bribery almost incredible. He had exacted from the tenantry in general the performance of duty-labour to such an extent, that his immense agricultural farms were managed

Killowen

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

with little expense to himself. If a poor man's corn were drop ripe, or his hay in a precarious state, or his turf undrawn, he must suffer his oats, hay, and turf, to be lost, in order to secure the crops of the agent. If he had spirit to refuse, he must expect to become a martyr to his resentment. In renewing leases his extortions were exorbitant; ten, thirty, forty, and fifty guineas he claimed as a fee for his favour, according to the ability of the party; yet this was quite distinct from the renewal fine, and went into his own pocket. When such "glove money" was not to be had, he would accept of a cow or horse, to which he usually made a point to take a fancy; or he wanted to purchase a firkin of butter at that particular time; and the poor people usually made every sacrifice to avoid his vengeance. It is due to Colonel B—— to say, that he acted in the investigation of his agent's conduct with the strictest honour and impartiality. He scrutinised every statement thoroughly, pleaded for him as temperately as he could; found, or pretended to find, extenuating motives for his most indefensible proceedings; but all would not do. The cases were so clear and evident against him, even in the opinion of the neighbouring gentry, who had been for years looking upon the system of selfish misrule which he practised, that at length the generous Colonel's blood boiled with indignation in his veins at the contemplation of his villany. He accused himself bitterly for neglecting his duties as a landlord, and felt both remorse and shame

for having wasted his time, health, and money, in the fashionable dissipation of London and Paris; whilst a cunning, unprincipled upstart played the vampire with his tenants, and turned his estate into a scene of oppression and poverty. Nor was this all; he had been endeavouring to bring the property more and more into his own clutches, a point which he would ultimately have gained, had not the Colonel's late succession to so large a fortune enabled him to meet his claims.

At one o'clock the tenants were all assembled about the inn door, where the Colonel had resolved to hold his little court. The agent himself soon arrived, as did several other gentlemen, the Colonel's friends, who knew the people, and could speak to their character.

The first man called was Dominick M'Evoy. No sooner was his name uttered, than a mild, poor-looking man, rather advanced in years, came forward.

"I beg your pardon, Colonel," said Carson, "here is some mistake; this man is not one of your tenants. You may remember I told you so this morning."

"I remember it," replied the Colonel; "this is 'the rascal' you spoke of—is he not? M'Evoy," the Colonel proceeded, "you will reply to my questions with strict truth. You will state nothing but what has occurred between you and my agent; you must not even turn a circumstance in your own favour, nor against Mr. Carson, by either adding to, or taking away from

it, more or less than the truth. I say this to you, and to all present; for, upon my honour, I shall dismiss the first case in which I discover a falsehood."

"Wid the help o' the Almighty, Sir, I'll state nothing but the bare thruth."

"How long are you off my estate?"

"Ten years, your honour, or a little more."

"How came you to run away out of your farm?"

"Run away, your honour! God, he knows, I didn't run away, Sir. The whole counthry knows that."

"Yes, run away! Mr. Carson, here, stated to me this morning, that you ran away. He is a gentleman of integrity, and would not state a falsehood."

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, not positively. I told you I did not exactly remember the circumstances; I said I thought so; but I may be wrong, for, indeed, my memory of facts is not good. M'Evoy, however, is a very *honest man,* and I have no doubt will state everything as it happened, fairly and without malice."

"An honest '*rascal,*' I suppose you mean, Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, bitterly. "Proceed, M'Evoy."

M'Evoy stated the circumstances precisely as the reader is already acquainted with them; after which the Colonel turned round to his agent and inquired what he had to say in reply.

"You cannot expect, Colonel B——," he replied, "that with such a multiplicity of business

on my hands, I could remember, after a lapse of ten years, the precise state of this particular case. Perhaps I may have some papers, a memorandum or so, at home, that may throw light upon it. At present I can only say, that the man failed in his rents, I ejected him, and put a better tenant in his place. I cannot see a crime in that."

"Plase your honour," replied M'Evoy, "I can prove by them that's standin' to the fore this minute, as well as by this written Affidavit, Sir, that I offered him the full rint, havin', at the same time, as God is my judge, ped part of it afore."

"That is certainly false—an untrue and malicious statement," said Carson. "I now remember that the cause of my resentment—yes, of my just resentment against you, was your reporting that I received your rent and withheld your receipt."

"Then," observed the Colonel, "there has been *more than one* charge of that nature brought against you? You mentioned *another* to me this morning, if I mistake not."

"I have made my oath, your honour, of the thruth of it; an' here is a dacent man, Sir, a Protestant, that lent me the money, an' was present when I offered it to him. Mr. Smith, come forrid, Sir, an' spake up for the poor man, as you're always willin' to do."

"I object to *his* evidence," said Carson: "he is my open enemy."

"I am your enemy, Mr. Carson, or rather

the enemy of your corruption and want of honesty," said Smith: "but, as you say, an *open* one. I scorn to say behind your back what I wouldn't say to your face. Right well you know I was present when he tendered you his rent. I lent him part of it. But why did you and your bailiffs turn him out, when his wife was on her sick bed? Allowing that he could not pay his rent, was that any reason you should do so barbarous an act as to drag a woman from her sick bed, and she at the point of death? But we know your reasons for it."

"Gentlemen," said the Colonel, "pray what character do M'Evoy and Smith here bear in the country?"

"We have known them both for years to be honest, conscientious men," said those whom he addressed: "such is their character, and in our opinion they well deserve it."

"God bless you, gintlemen!" said M'Evoy—"God bless your honours for your kind words! I'm sure, for my own part, I hope I'll always desarve your good opinion, although but a poor man *now,* God help me!"

"Pray, who occupies the farm at present, Mr. Carson?"

"The man I mentioned to you this morning, Sir. His name is Jackson."

"And pray, Mr. Carson, who is his wife?"

"Oh, by the by, Colonel, that's a little too close! I see the gentlemen smile; but they know I must beg to decline answering that question—not that it matters much. We have

all sown our wild oats in our time—myself as well as another—ha, ha, ha!"

"The fact, under other circumstances," observed the Colonel, "could never draw an inquiry from me; but as it is connected with, or probably has occasioned, a gross, unfeeling, and an unjust act of oppression towards an honest man, I therefore alluded to it, as exhibiting the motives from which you acted. She is your illegitimate daughter, Sir!"

"She's one o' the baker's dozen o' them, plase your honour," observed a humorous little Presbyterian, with a sarcastic face, and sharp northern accent—"for feth, Sir, for my part, A thenk he hes one on every hill head. A'll count, your honour, on my fingers a roun' half-dozen, aall on your estate, Sir, featherin' their nests as fast as they can."

"Is this Jackson a good tenant, Mr. Carson?"

"I gave you his character this morning, Colonel B."

"Hout, Colonel!" said the Presbyterian, "deil a penny rent the man pays, at aall, at aall. A'll swear A hev it from Jackson's own lips. He made him a Bailey, Sir; he suts rent free. Ask the man, Sir, for his receipts, an' A'll warrant the truth will come out."

"I have secured Jackson's attendance," said the Colonel: "let him be called in."

The man in a few minutes entered.

"Jackson," said the Colonel, "how long is it since you paid Mr. Carson here any rent?"

Jackson looked at Carson for his cue; but the Colonel rose up indignantly: "Fellow!" he proceeded, "if you tamper with me a single moment, you shall find Mr. Carson badly able to protect you. If you speak falsehood, be it at your peril."

"By Jing, Sir," said Jackson, "A'll say nothin' aginst my father-in-laa, an' A don't care who teks it well or ull. A was jist tekin' a *gun*[51] with a fren' or two—an' d—— me, A say, A'll stick to my father-in-laa, for he hes stuck to me."

"You appear to be a hardened drunken wretch," observed the Colonel. "Will you be civil enough to show your last receipt for rent?"

"Wull A show it? A dono whether A wull or not, nor A dono whether A hev it or not; but ef aal the receipts in Europe wur burnt, d—— my blood, but A'll stick to my father-in-laa."

"Your father-in-law may be proud of you," said the Colonel.

"By h——, A'll back you en that," said the fellow nodding his head, and looking round him confidently. "By h——, A say that, too!"

"And I am sorry to be compelled to add," continued the Colonel, "that you may be equally proud of your father-in-law."

"A say, right agane! D—— me, bit A'll back that too!" and he nodded confidently, and looked around the room once more. "A wull, d—— my blood, bit no man can say agane it. A'm married to his daughther; an', by the sun

that shines, A'll still stan' up for my father-in-laa."

"Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, "can you disprove these facts? Can you show that you did not expel M'Evoy from his farm, and put the husband of your illegitimate daughter into it? That you did not receive his rent, decline giving him a receipt, and afterwards compel him to pay twice, because he could not produce the receipt which you withheld?"

"Gentlemen," said Carson, not directly replying to the Colonel, "there is a base conspiracy got up against me; and I can perceive, moreover, that there is evidently some unaccountable intention on the part of Colonel B. to insult my feelings, and injure my character. When paltry circumstances that have occurred above ten years ago, are raked up in my teeth, I have little to say, but that it proves how very badly off the Colonel must have been for an imputation against my conduct and discretion as his agent, since he finds himself compelled to hunt so far back for a charge."

"That is by no means the heaviest charge I have to bring against you," replied the Colonel. "There is no lack of them; nor shall you be able to complain that they are not *recent,* as well as of longer standing. Your conduct in the case of poor honest M'Evoy here, is black and iniquitous. He must be restored to his farm, but by other hands than yours, and that ruffian instantly expelled from it. From this moment, Sir, you cease to be my agent. You have be-

trayed the confidence I reposed in you; you have misled me as to the character of my tenants; you have been a deceitful, cringing, cunning, selfish, and rapacious tyrant. My people you have ground to dust; my property you have lessened in value nearly one-half, and for your motives in doing this, I refer you to certain transactions and legal documents which passed between us. There is nothing cruel or mercenary which you did not practise, in order to enrich yourself. The whole tenor of your conduct is before me. Your profligacy is not only discovered, but already proved; and you played those villanous pranks, I suppose, because I have been mostly an Absentee. Do not think, however, that you shall enjoy the fruits of your extortion? I will place the circumstances, and the proofs of the respective charges against you, in the hands of my solicitor, and, by the sacred heaven above me! you shall disgorge the fruits of your rapacity. My good people, I shall remain among you for another fortnight, during which time I intend to go through my estate, and set everything to rights as well as I can, until I may appoint a humane and feeling *gentleman* as my agent—such a one as will have, at least, a *character* to lose. I also take this opportunity of informing you, that in future I shall visit you often, will redress your grievances, should you have any to complain of, and will give such assistance to the honest and industrious among you—but to *them only*—as I trust may make us better pleased with each other than we have

been.—Do not you go, M'Evoy, until I speak to you."

During these observations Carson sat with a smile, or rather a sneer upon his lips. It was the sneer of a purse-proud villain, confident that his wealth, no matter how ill-gotten, was still wealth, and worth its value.

"Colonel," said he, "I have heard all you said, but you see me 'so strong in honesty,' that I am not moved. In the course of a few weeks I shall have purchased an estate of my own, *which I will manage differently,* for my fortune is made, Sir. I intend also to give up my other agencies: I am rather old, and must retire to enjoy a little of the *otium cum dignitate.* I wish you all good morning!"

The Colonel turned away in abhorrence, but disdained any reply.

"A say, Sam," said the Presbyterian, "bring your son-in-laa wuth you."

"An' A say that too," exclaimed the drunken ruffian—"A say that; A do. A'm married to his daughther; an' A say stull, that d—— my blood, bit A'll stick to my father-in-laa! That's the point!"—and again he nodded his head, and looked round him with a drunken swagger:—"A'll stick to my father-in-laa! A'll do that; feth, A wull!" [52]

It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader, that the Colonel's address to Carson soon got among the assembled tenantry, and a vehement volley of groans and hisses followed the discarded agent up the street.

"Ha! bad luck to you for an ould villain. You were made to hear on the deaf side o' your head at last! You may take the black wool out o' your ears now, you rip! The cries an' curses o' the widows an' orphans that you made and oppressed, has ris up agin you at the long run! Ha! you beggarly nager! maybe you'll make us neglect our own work to do yours agin! Go an' gather the dhry cow-cakes, you misert, an' bring them home in your pocket, to throw on the dunghill!"

"Do you remimber the day," said others, "you met Mr. M. an' you goin' up the street wid a cake of it in your fists, undher your shabby skirts; an' whin the gintleman wint to shake hands wid you, how he discovered your maneness? Three groans for Yallow Sam, the extortioner! A short coorse to him! Your corner's warm for you, you villain!"

"But now, boys, for the Colonel!" they exclaimed.—"Huzza for noble Colonel B——, the rale Irish gintleman, that wouldn't see his tenants put upon by a villain!—Huzza! Hell resave yees, shout! Huzza! Huzza! Huzza! Huz—tundher-an'-ounze, my voice is cracked! Where's his coach?—where's his honour's coach? Come, boys, out wid it!—out wid it! Tattheration to yees, come! We'll dhraw it to the divil, to hell, an' back agin, if it plases him! Success to Colonel B——! Blood-an-turf! what'll we do for a fight? Long life to noble Colonel B——, the poor man's friend!—long life to him for ever

an a day longer! Whoo! my darlins! Huzza!" &c.

The warm interest which the Colonel took in M'Evoy's behalf, was looked upon by the other tenants as a guarantee of his sincerity in all he promised. Their enthusiasm knew no bounds. They got out his carriage from the Inn-yard, and drew it through the town, though the Colonel himself, beyond the fact of their shouting, remained quite ignorant of what was going forward.

After Carson's departure, the Colonel's friends, having been first asked to dine with him at the inn, also took their leave, and none remained but M'Evoy, who waited with pleasing anxiety to hear what the Colonel proposed to say—for he felt certain that it would be agreeable.

"M'Evoy," said the Colonel, "I am truly sorry for what you have suffered through the villany of my agent; but I will give you redress, and allow you for what you have lost by the transaction. It is true, as I have been lately told by a person who pleaded your cause nobly and eloquently, that I can never repay you for what you have suffered. However, what we can, we will do. You are poor, I understand?"

"God he sees that, Sir; and afflicted, too, plase your honour."

"Afflicted? How is that?"

"I had a son, Sir—a blessed boy! a darlin'

boy!—once our comfort, an' once we thought he'd be our pride an' our staff, but" —

The poor man's tears here flowed fast; he took up the skirt of his "Cotha More," or great-coat, and, after wiping his eyes, and clearing his voice, proceeded:—

"He was always, as I said, a blessed boy, and we looked up to him always, Sir. He saw our poverty, your honour, an' he felt it, Sir, keen enough, indeed, God help him! How-an'-iver, he took it on him to go up to Munster, Sir, undher hopes of risin' us—undher the hopes, poor child—an' God knows, Sir,—if—oh, Jemmy avourneen machree!—I doubt—I doubt you sunk undher what proved too many for you! —I doubt my child's dead, Sir—him that all our hearts wor fixed upon; and if that 'ud happen to be the case, nothin'—not even your kindness in doin' us justice, could make us happy. We would rather beg wid him, Sir, nor have the best in the world widout him. His poor young heart, Sir, was fixed upon the place your honour is restorin' us to; an' I'm afeard his mother, Sir, would break her heart if she thought he couldn't share our good fortune! And we don't know whether he's livin' or dead! That, Sir, is what's afflictin' us. I had some notion of goin' to look for him; but he tould us he would never write, or let us hear from him, till he'd be either one thing or other."

"I can tell you, for your satisfaction, that your son is well, M'Evoy. Believe me, he is well —I know it."

"Well! Before God, does your honour spake truth? Well! Oh, Sir, for His sake that died for us, an' for the sake of his blessed mother, can you tell me is my darlin' son alive?"

"He is living; is in excellent health; is as well dressed as I am; and has friends as rich and as capable of assisting him as myself. But how is this? What's the matter with you? You are pale! Good God! Here, waiter! Waiter! Waiter, I say!"

The Colonel rang the bell violently, and two or three waiters entered at the same moment.

"Bring a little wine and water, one of you, and let the other two remove this man to the open window. Be quick. What do you stare at?"

In a few minutes the old man recovered, and untying the narrow coarse cravat which he wore, wiped the perspiration off his pale face.

"Pray, don't be too much affected," said the Colonel. "Waiter, bring up refreshment—bring wine—be quiet and calm—you are weak, poor fellow—but we will strengthen you by-and-by."

"I am wake, Sir," he replied; "for, God help us! this was a hard year upon us; and we suffered what few could bear. But he's livin' Colonel. Our darlin' is livin'! Oh, Colonel, your kindness went to my heart this day afore, but that was nothin'—he's livin' an' well! On my two knees, before God, I thank you for them words! I thank you a thousand an' a thousand

times more for them words, nor for what your honour did about Yallow Sam."

"Get up," said the Colonel—"get up. The proceedings of the day have produced a revulsion of feeling which has rendered you incapable of sustaining intelligence of your son. He is well, I assure you. Bring those things to this table, waiter."

"But can your honour tell me anything in particular about him, Sir? What he's doin'—or what he intends to do?"

"Yes! he is at a respectable boarding-school."

"Boordin'-school! But isn't boordin'-schools Protestants, Sir?"

"Not at all; he is at a Catholic boarding-school, and reading hard to be a priest, which, I hope, he will soon be. He has good friends, and you may thank *him* for being restored to your farm."

"Glory be to my Maker for that! Oh, Sir, your tenants wor desaved in you! They thought, Sir, that you wor a hard-hearted gintleman, that didn't care whether they lived or died."

"I feel that I neglected them too long, M'-Evoy. Now take some refreshment: eat something, and afterwards drink a few glasses of wine. Your feelings have been much excited, and you will be the better for it. Keep up your spirits. I am going to ride, and must leave you: but if you call on me to-morrow, at one o'clock, I shall have more good news for you.

We must stock your farm, and enable you to enter upon it creditably."

"Sir," said M'Evoy, "you are a Protestant; but, as I hope to enther glory, I an' my wife an' childhre will pray that your bed may be made in heaven, this night; and that your honour may be led to see the thruth an' the right coorse."

The Colonel then left him; and the simple man, on looking at the cold meat, bread, and wine before him, raised his hands and eyes towards heaven, to thank God for his goodness, and to invoke a blessing upon his noble and munificent benefactor.

But how shall we describe the feelings of his family, when, after returning home, he related the occurrences of that day. The severe and pressing exigencies under which they laboured had prevented his sons from attending the investigation that was to take place in town. Their expectations, however, were raised, and they looked out with intense anxiety for the return of their father.

At length, he was seen coming slowly up the hill; the spades were thrown aside, and the whole family assembled to hear "what was done."

The father entered in silence, sat down, and after wiping his brow, and laying down his hat, placing his staff across it upon the floor he drew his breath deeply.

"Dominick," said the wife, "what news? What was done?"

"Vara," replied Dominick, "do you remimber the day—fair and handsome you wor then

—when I first kissed your lips, as my own darlin' wife?"

"Ah, avourneen, Dominick, don't spake of them times. The happiness we had then is long gone, acushla, in one sense."

"It's before me like yestherday, Vara,—the delight that went through my heart, jist as clear as yestherday, or the blessed sun that's shinin' through the broken windy on the floor there. I remimber, Vara, saying to you that day—I don't know whether *you* remimber it or not—but *I* remimber sayin' to you, that if I lived a thousand years, I could never feel sich happiness as I did when I first pressed you to my heart as my own wife."

"Well, but we want to hear what happened, Dominick, achora."

"Do you remimber the words, Vara?"

"Och! I do, avourneen. *Didn't they go into my heart at the time,* an' *how* could I *forget* them? But I can't bear, somehow, to look back at what we wor then, bekase I feel my heart brakin', acushla!"

"Well, Vara, look at me. Amn't I a poor wasted crathur now, in comparishment to what I was thin?"

"God he sees the change that's in you, darlin'! But sure 'twasn't your fau't, or mine either, Dominick, avillish!"

"Well, Vara, you see me now—I'm happier—before God, I'm happier—happier, a thousand degrees, than I was thin! Come to my arms, asthore machree—my heart's breakin'—but it's

wid happiness—don't be frightened—it's wid joy I'm sheddin' these tears—it's wid happiness an' delight I'm cryin! Jemmy is livin', an' well, childhre—he's livin' an' well, Vara—the star of our hearts is livin', an' well, an' happy! Kneel down, childhre—kneel down! Bend before the great God, an' thank him for his kindness to your blessed brother—to our blessed son. Bless the Colonel, childhre; bless him whin you're down, Protestant an' all, as he is. Oh, bless him as if you prayed for myself, or for Jemmy, that's far away from us!"

He paused for a few minutes, bent his head upon his hands as he knelt in supplication at the chair, then resumed his seat, as did the whole family, deeply affected.

"Now, childhre," said he, "I'll tell yez all; but don't any of you be so poor a crathur as I was to-day. Bear it mild an' asy, Vara, acushla, for I know it will take a start out of you. Sure we're to go back to our own ould farm! Ay, an' what's more—oh, God of heaven, bless him!—what's more, the Colonel is to stock it for us, an' to help us; an' what is more, Yallow Sam is *out!* OUT!!"

"Out!" they exclaimed: "Jemmy well, an' Yallow Sam out! Oh, father, surely"——

"Now behave, I say. Ay, and never to come in again! But who do you think got him out?"

"Who?—why God he knows. Who *could* get him out?"

"Our son, Vara—our son, childhre: Jemmy

occasion, a profound secret to M'Evoy and his family.[53] It is true, they *supposed* it to be mutton; but not one of them could pronounce it to be such, from any positive knowledge of its peculiar flavour.

"Well," said Dominick, "it's no matther what the name of it is, in regard that it's good mate, any way, for them that has enough of it."

With a fervent heart and streaming eyes did this virtuous family offer up their grateful prayers to that God whose laws they had not knowingly violated, and to whose providence they owed so much. Nor was their benefactor forgotten. The strength and energy of the Irish language, being that in which the peasantry usually pray, were well adapted to express the depth of their gratitude towards a man who had, as they said, "humbled himself to look into their wants, as if he was like one of themselves!"

For upwards of ten years they had not gone to bed free from the heaviness of care, or the wasting grasp of poverty. Now their hearth was once more surrounded by peace and contentment; their burthens were removed, their pulses beat freely, and the language of happiness again was heard under their humble roof. Even sleep could not repress the vivacity of their enjoyments: they dreamt of their brother—for in the Irish heart the domestic affections hold the first place;—they dreamt of the farm to which those affections had so long yearned. They trod it again as its legitimate possessors. Its fields were brighter, its corn waved with softer mur-

murs to the breeze, its harvests were richer, and the song of their harvest home more cheerful than before. Their delight was tumultuous, but intense; and when they arose in the morning to

A sober certainty of waking bliss,

they again knelt in worship to God with exulting hearts, and again offered up their sincere prayers in behalf of the just man who had asserted their rights against the oppressor.

Colonel B. was a man who, without having been aware of it, possessed an excellent capacity for business. The neglect of his property resulted not from want of feeling, but merely from want of consideration. There had moreover been no precedent for him to follow. He had seen no Irishman of rank ever bestow a moment's attention on his tenantry. They had been, for the most part, absentees like himself, and felt satisfied if they succeeded in receiving their half-yearly remittance in due course, without ever reflecting for a moment upon the situation of those from whom it was drawn.

Nay, what was more—he had not seen even the *resident* gentry enter into the state and circumstances of those who lived upon their property. It was a mere accident that determined him to become acquainted with his tenants; but no sooner had he seen his duty, and come to the resolution of performing it, than the decision of his character became apparent. It is true, that, within the last few years, the Irish landlords

have advanced in knowledge. Many of them have introduced more improved systems of agriculture, and instructed their tenants in the best methods of applying them; but during the time of which we write, an Irish landlord only saw his tenants when canvassing them for their votes, and instructing them in dishonesty and perjury, not reflecting that he was then teaching them to practise the arts of dissimulation and fraud against himself. This was the late system: let us hope that it will be superseded by a better one; and that a landlord will think it a duty, but neither a trouble nor a condescension, to look into his own affairs, and keep an eye upon the morals and habits of his tenantry.

The Colonel, as he had said, remained more than a fortnight upon his estate; and, as he often declared since, the recollections arising from the good which he performed during that brief period, rendered it the portion of his past life upon which he could look with most satisfaction. He did not leave the country till he saw M'Evoy and his family restored to their farm, and once more independent;—until he had redressed every well-founded complaint, secured the affections of those who had before detested him, and diffused peace and comfort amongst every family upon his estate. From thenceforth he watched the interests of his tenants, and soon found that in promoting their welfare, and instructing them in their duties, he was more his own benefactor than theirs. Before many years had elapsed, his property was wonderfully improved; he him-

self was called the "Lucky Landlord," "bekase," said the people, "ever since he spoke to, an' advised his tenants, we find that it's *lucky* to live undher him. The people has heart to work wid a gintleman that won't grind thim; an' so sign's on it, every one thrives upon his land; an' dang my bones, but I believe a rotten stick 'ud grow on it, set in case it was thried."

In sooth, his popularity became proverbial; but it is probable, that not even his justice and humanity contributed so much to this, as the vigour with which he prosecuted his suit against "Yellow Sam," whom he compelled literally to "disgorge" the fruits of his heartless extortion. This worthy agent died soon after his disgrace, without any legitimate issue; and his property, which amounted to about fifty thousand pounds, is now inherited by a gentleman of the strictest honour and integrity. To this day his memory is detested by the people, who, with that bitterness by which they stigmatise a villain, have erected him into a standard of dishonesty. If a man become remarkable for want of principle, they usually say—"he's as great a rogue as Yallow Sam;" or, "he is the greatest sconce that ever was in the country, *barrin'* Yallow Sam."

We now dismiss him, and request our readers, at the same time, not to suppose that we have held him up as a portrait of Irish agents in general. On the contrary, we believe that they constitute a most respectable class of men, who have certainly very difficult duties to perform. The Irish landlords, we are happy to say, taught

by experience, have, for the most part, both seen and felt the necessity of appointing gentlemen of property to situations so very important, and which require so much patience, consideration, and humanity, in those who fill them. We trust they will persevere in this plan;[54] but we can assure them, that all the virtues of the best agent can never compensate, in the opinion of the people, for neglect in the "Head Landlord." One visit or act, even of nominal kindness, from *him,* will at any time produce more attachment and gratitude among them, than a whole life spent in good offices by an agent. Like Sterne's French Beggar, they would prefer a pinch of snuff from the one, to a guinea from the other. The agent only renders them a favour, but the Head Landlord does them an honour.

Colonel B., immediately after his return home, sent for Mr. O'Brien, who waited on him with a greater degree of curiosity than perhaps he had ever felt before. The Colonel smiled as he extended his hand to him.

"Mr. O'Brien," said he, "I knew you would feel anxious to hear the result of my visit to the estate which this man with the nickname managed for me."

"*Managed,* Sir? Did you say managed?"

"I spoke in the past time, O'Brien: he is out."

"Then your *protégé's* story was correct, Sir?"

"True to a tittle. O'Brien, there is something extraordinary in that boy; otherwise, how could it happen that a sickly, miserable-looking crea-

ture, absolutely in tatters, could have impressed us both so strongly with a sense of the injustice done ten years ago to his father? It is, indeed, remarkable."

"The boy, Colonel, deeply felt that act of injustice, and the expression of it came home to the heart."

"I have restored his father, however. The poor man and his family are once more happy. I have stocked their old farm for them; in fact, they now enjoy comfort and independence."

"I am glad, Sir, that you have done them justice. That act, alone, will go far to redeem your character from the odium which the conduct of your agent was calculated to throw upon it."

"There is not probably in Ireland a landlord so popular as I am this moment—at least among my tenants on *that* property. Restoring M'Evoy, however, is but a small part of what I have done. Carson's pranks were incredible. He was a rack-renter of the first water. A person named Brady had paid him twenty-five guineas as a *douceur*—in other words, as a bribe—for renewing a lease for him; yet, after having received the money, he kept the poor man dangling after him, and at length told him that he was offered a larger sum by another. In some cases he kept back the receipts, and made the poor people pay twice, which was still more iniquitous. Then, Sir, he would not take bank notes in payment. No; he was so wonderfully conscientious, and so zealously punctual, in fulfilling *my wishes*, as he told them on the subject, that nothing would

pass in payment but gold. This gold, Sir, they were compelled to receive from himself, at a most oppressive premium; so that he actually fleeced them under my name, in every conceivable manner and form of villany. He is a usurer, too; and, I am told, worth forty or fifty thousand pounds: but, thank heaven! he is no longer an agent of mine."

"It gives me sincere pleasure, Sir, that you have at length got correct habits of thinking upon your duties as an Irish landlord; for believe me, Colonel B., as a subject involving a great portion of national happiness or national misery, it is entitled to the deepest and most serious consideration, not only of the class to which you belong, but of the legislature. Something should be done, Sir, to improve the condition of the poorer classes. A rich country and poor inhabitants is an anomaly; and whatever is done should be prompt and effectual. If the Irish landlords looked directly into the state of their tenantry, and set themselves vigorously to the task of bettering their circumstances, they would, I am certain, establish the tranquillity and happiness of the country at large. The great secret, Colonel, of the dissensions that prevail among us is the poverty of the people. They are poor, and therefore the more easily wrought up to outrage; they are poor, and think that *any* change must be for the better; they are not only poor, but imaginative, and the fittest recipients for those vague speculations by which they are deluded. Let their condition be im-

proved, and the most fertile source of popular tumult and crime is closed. Let them be taught *how* to labour: let them not be bowed to the earth by rents so far above the real value of their lands. The pernicious maxims which float among them must be refuted—not by theory, but by practical lessons performed before their eyes for their own advantage. Let them be taught how to discriminate between their real interests and their prejudices; and none can teach them all this so effectually as their landlords, if they could be roused from their apathy, and induced to undertake the task. Who ever saw a poor nation without great crimes?"

"Very true, O'Brien; quite true. I am resolved to inspect personally the condition of those who reside on my other estates. But now about our *protégé?* How is he doing?"

"Extremely well. I have had a letter from him a few days ago, in which he alludes to the interest you have taken in himself and his family, with a depth of feeling truly affecting."

"When you write to him, let him know that I have placed his father in his old farm; and that Carson is out. Say I am sure he will conduct himself properly, in which case I charge myself with his expenses until he shall have accomplished his purpose. After that he may work his own way through life, and I have no doubt but he will do it well and honourably."

Colonel B——'s pledge on this occasion was nobly redeemed. Our humble hero pursued his studies with zeal and success. In due time he

entered Maynooth, where he distinguished himself not simply for smartness as a student, but as a young man possessed of a mind far above the common order. During all this time nothing occurred worthy of particular remark, except that, in fulfilment of his former vow, he never wrote to any of his friends; for the reader should have been told, that this was originally comprehended in the determination he had formed. He received ordination at the hands of his friend the Bishop, whom we have already introduced to the reader, and on the same day he was appointed by that gentleman to a curacy in his own parish. The Colonel, whose regard for him never cooled, presented him with fifty pounds, together with a horse, saddle, and bridle; so that he found himself in a capacity to enter upon his duties in a decent and becoming manner. Another circumstance that added considerably to his satisfaction, was the appointment of Mr. O'Brien to a parish adjoining that of the Bishop. James's afflictions had been the means of bringing the merits of that excellent man before his spiritual superior, who became much attached to him, and availed himself of the earliest opportunity of rewarding his unobtrusive piety and benevolence.

No sooner was his ordination completed, than the long suppressed yearnings after his home and kindred came upon his spirit with a power that could not be restrained. He took leave of his friends with a beating heart, and set out on a delightful summer morning to revisit all that had

been, notwithstanding his long absence and severe trials, so strongly wrought into his memory and affections. Our readers may, therefore, suppose him on his journey home, and permit themselves to be led in imagination to the house of his former friend, Lanigan, where we must lay the scene for the present.

Lanigan's residence has the same comfortable and warm appearance which always distinguishes the habitation of the independent and virtuous man. What, however, can the stir, and bustle, and agitation which prevail in it mean? The daughters run out to a little mound, or natural terrace, beside the house, and look anxiously towards the road; then return, and almost immediately appear again, with the same intense anxiety to catch a glimpse of some one whom they expect. They look keenly; but why is it that their disappointment appears to be attended with such dismay? They go into their father's house once more, wringing their hands, and betraying all the symptoms of affliction. Here is their mother, too, coming to peer into the distance, she is rocking with that motion peculiar to Irishwomen when suffering distress. She places her open hand upon her brows that she may collect her sight to a particular spot; she is blinded by her tears; breaks out into a low wail, and returns with something like the darkness of despair on her countenance. She goes into the house, passes through the kitchen, and enters into a bed-room; seats herself on a chair beside the bed, and renews her low but bitter wail of sorrow. Her

husband is lying in that state which the peasantry know usually precedes the agonies of death.

"For the sake of the livin' God," said he, on seeing her, "is there any sign o' them?"

"Not yet, *a suillish;*[55] but they will soon—they must soon, asthore, be here, an' thin your mind will be asy."

"Oh, Alley, Alley, if you could know what I suffer for 'fraid I'd die widout the priest, you'd pity me!"

"I do pity you, asthore: but don't be cast down, for I have my trust in God that he won't desart you in your last hour. You did what you could, my heart's pride; you bent before him night an' mornin', and sure the poor neighbour never wint from your door widout lavin' his blessin' behind him."

The dying man raised his hands feebly from the bed-clothes; "Ah!" he exclaimed, "I thought I did a great dale, Alley: but now—but now—it appears nothin' to what I ought to a' done when I could. Still, avourneen, my life's not unpleasant when I look back at it; for I can't remimber that I ever purposely offinded a livin' mortal. All I want to satisfy me is the priest."

"No, avourneen, you did not; for it wasn't in you to offind a child."

"Alley, you'll pardon me an' forgive me acushla, if ever—if ever I did what was displasin' to you! An' call in the childhre, till I see them about me—I want to have their forgiveness, too. I know I'll have it—for they wor good childhre, an' ever loved me."

The daughters now entered the room, exclaiming—"*Ahir dheelish,* (beloved father,) Pether is comin' by himself, but no priest! Blessed Queen of Heaven, what will we do! Oh! father darlin', are you to die widout the Holy Ointment?"

The sick man clasped his hands, looked towards heaven, and groaned aloud.

"Oh, it's hard, this," said he. "It's hard upon me! Yet I won't be cast down. I'll trust in my good God; I'll trust in his blessed name!"

His wife on hearing that her son was returned without the priest, sat, with her face shrouded by her apron, weeping in grief that none but they who know the dependence which those belonging to her church place in its last rites can comprehend. The children appeared almost distracted; their grief had more of that stunning character which attends unexpected calamity, than of sorrow for one who is gradually drawn from life.

At length the messenger entered the room, and almost choked with tears, stated that both priests were absent that day at Conference, and would not return till late.

The hitherto moderated grief of the wife arose to a pitch much wilder than the death of her husband could, under ordinary circumstances, occasion. To die without absolution—to pass away into eternity "unanointed, unanealed"—without being purified from the inherent stains of humanity—was to her a much deeper affliction than her final separation from him. She cried in

tones of the most piercing despair, and clapped her hands, as they do who weep over the dead. Had he died in the calm confidence of having received the *Viaticum*, or Sacrament before death, his decease would have had nothing remarkably calamitous in it, beyond usual occurrences of a similar nature. Now the grief was intensely bitter in consequence of his expected departure without the priest. His sons and daughters felt it as forcibly as his wife; their lamentations were full of the strongest and sharpest agony.

For nearly three hours did they remain in this situation; poor Lanigan sinking by degrees into that collapsed state from which there is no possibility of rallying. He was merely able to speak, and recognise his family; but every moment advanced him, with awful certainty, nearer and nearer to his end.

A great number of the neighbours were now assembled, all participating in the awful feeling which predominated, and anxious to compensate by their prayers for the absence of that confidence derived by Roman Catholics during the approach of death, from the spiritual aid of the priest. They were all at prayer; the sick room and kitchen were crowded with his friends and acquaintances, many of whom knelt out before the door, and joined with loud voices in the Rosary which was offered up in his behalf.

In this crisis were they, when a horseman, dressed in black, approached the house. Every head was instantly turned round, with a hope that it might be the parish priest or his curate; but,

alas! they were doomed to experience a fresh disappointment. The stranger, though clerical enough in his appearance, presented a countenance with which none of them was acquainted. On glancing at the group who knelt around the door, he appeared to understand the melancholy cause which brought them together.

"How is this?" he exclaimed. "Is there any one here sick or dying?"

"Poor Misther Lanigan, Sir, is jist departin', glory be to God! An' what is terrible all out upon himself and family, he's dyin' widout the priest. They're both at Conwhirence, Sir, and can't come—Mr. Dogherty an' his curate."

"Make way!" said the stranger, throwing himself off his horse, and passing quickly through the people. "Show me to the sick man's room—be quick, my friends—I am a Catholic clergyman."

In a moment a passage was cleared, and the stranger found himself beside the bed of death. Grief in the room was loud and bitter; but his presence stilled it despite of what they felt.

"My dear friends," said he, "you know there should be silence in the apartment of a dying man. For shame!—for shame! Cease this clamour, it will but distract him for whom you weep, and prevent him from composing his mind for the great trial that is before him."

"Sir," said Lanigan's wife, seizing his hand in both hers, and looking distractedly in his face, "are you a priest? For heaven's sake tell us!"

"I am," he replied; "leave the room every one

of you. I hope your husband is not speechless?"

"Sweet Queen of Heaven, not yet, may her name be praised! but near it, your Reverence—widin little or no time of it."

Whilst they spoke, he was engaged in putting the stole about his neck, after which he cleared the room, and commenced hearing Lanigan's confession.

The appearance of a priest, and the consolation it produced, rallied the powers of life in the benevolent farmer. He became more collected; made a clear and satisfactory confession; received the sacrament of Extreme Unction; and felt himself able to speak with tolerable distinctness and precision. The effects of all this were astonishing. A placid serenity, full of hope and confidence, beamed from the pale and worn features of him who was but a few minutes before in a state of terror altogether indescribable. When his wife and family, after having been called in, observed this change, they immediately participated in his tranquillity. Death had been deprived of its sting, and grief of its bitterness; their sorrow was still deep, but it was not darkened by the dread of future misery. They felt for him as a beloved father, a kind husband, and a dear friend, who had lived a virtuous life, feared God, and was now about to pass into happiness.

When the rites of the church were administered, and the family again assembled round the bed, the priest sat down in a position which enabled him to see the features of this good man more distinctly.

"I would be glad," said Lanigan, "to know who it is that God in his goodness has sent to smooth my bed in death, if it 'ud be plasin', Sir, to you to tell me?"

"Do you remember," replied the priest, "a young lad whom you met some years ago on his way to Munster, as a poor scholar? You and your family were particularly kind to him; so kind that he has never since forgotten your affectionate hospitality."

"We do, your Reverence, we do. A mild, gentle crathur he was, poor boy. I hope God prospered him."

"You see him now before you," said the priest. "I am that boy, and I thank God that I can testify, however slightly, my deep sense of the virtues which you exercised towards me; although I regret that the occasion is one of such affliction."

The farmer raised his eyes and feeble hands towards heaven. "Praise an' glory to your name, good God!" he exclaimed. "Praise an' glory to your holy name! Now I know that I'm not forgotten, when you brought back the little kindness I did that boy for *your sake,* wid so many blessins to me in the hour of my affliction an' sufferin'! Childher remimber this, now that I'm goin' to lave yez for ever! Remimber always to help the stranger, an' thim that's poor an' in sorrow. If you do, God won't forget it to you; but will bring it back to yez when you stand in need of it, as he done to me this day. You see, childhre dear, how small thrifles o' that

kind depend on one another. If I hadn't thought of helpin' his Reverence here when he was young and away from his own, he wouldn't think of callin' upon us this day as he was passin'. You see the hand of God is in it, childhre: which it is, indeed, in every thing that passes about us, if we could only see it as we ought to do. Thin, but I'd like to look upon your face, Sir, if it's plasin' to you? A little more to the light, Sir. There, I now see you. Ay, indeed, it's changed for the betther it is—the same mild, clear countenance, but not sorrowful, as when I seen it last. Suffer me to put my hand on your head, Sir; I'd like to bless you before I die, for I can't forget what you undhertook to do for your parents."

The priest sat near him; but finding that he was scarcely able to raise his hand to his head, he knelt down, and the farmer, before he communicated the blessing, inquired—

"Musha, Sir, may I ax, wor you able to do anything to help your family as you expected?"

"God," said the priest, "made me the instrument of raising them from their poverty; they are now comfortable and happy."

"Ay! Well I knew at the time, an' I said it, that a blessin' would attind your endayvours. An' now resave *my* blessin'. May you never depart from the right way! May the blessin' of God rest upon you for ever—Amin! Childhre, I'm gettin' wake; come near me, till, till I bless you, too, for the last time! They wor good childhre, Sir—they were ever an' always good to me, an' to their poor mother, your Reverence;

an'—God forgive me if it's a sin!—but I feel a great dale o' my heart an' my love fixed upon them. But sure, I'm their father, an' God, I hope, will look over it! Now, darlins, afore I bless yez, I ax your forgiveness if ever I was harsher to yez than I ought!"

The children with a simultaneous movement encircled his bed, and could not reply for some minutes.

"Never, father darlin'! Oh, never did you offind us! Don't speak in that way, or you'll break our hearts; but forgive *us*, father asthore! Oh, forgive an' bless us, an' don't remimber against us, our folly an' disobedience, for it's only now that we see we warn't towards you as we ought to be. Forgive us an' pardon us!"

He then made them all kneel around his bed, and with solemn words, and an impressive manner, placed his hand upon their heads, and blessed them with a virtuous father's last blessing.

He then called for his wife, and the scene became not only more touching, but more elevated. There was an exultation in her manner, and an expression of vivid hope in her eye, arising from the fact of her husband having received, and been soothed by, the rites of her church, that gave evident proof of the unparalleled attachment borne by persons of her class to the Catholic religion. The arrival of our hero had been so unexpected, and the terrors of the tender wife for her husband's soul so great, that the administration of the sacrament almost superseded from her heart every other sensation than that of devotional tri-

umph. Even now, in the midst of her tears, that triumph kindled in her eye, with a light that shone in melancholy beauty upon the bed of death. In proportion, however, as the parting scene—which was to be their *last*—began to work with greater power upon her sorrow, so did this expression gradually fade away. Grief for his loss resumed its dominion over her heart so strongly, that their last parting was afflicting even to look upon.

When it was over, Lanigan once more addressed the priest:—

"Now, Sir," he observed, but with great difficulty, "let me have *your* blessin' an' your prayers; an' along wid that, your Reverence, if you remimber a request I once made to you"—

"I remember it well," replied the priest; "you allude to the masses which you wished me to say for you, should I ever receive Orders. Make your mind easy on that point. I not only *shall* offer up mass for the repose of your soul, but I can assure you that I *have* mentioned you *by name* in every mass which I celebrated since my ordination."

He then proceeded to direct the mind of his dying benefactor to such subjects as were best calculated to comfort and strengthen him.

About day-break the next morning, this man of many virtues, after struggling rather severely for two hours preceding his death, passed into eternity, there to enjoy the recompense of a well-spent life.

When he was dead, the priest, who never left

him during the night, approached the bed, and after surveying his benevolent features, now composed in the stillness of death, exclaimed—

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them!"

Having uttered the words aloud, he sat down beside the bed, buried his face in his handkerchief, and wept.

He was now only a short day's journey from home, and as his presence, he knew, would be rather a restraint upon a family so much in affliction, he bade them farewell, and proceeded on his way. He travelled slowly, and, as every well-known hill or lake appeared to him, his heart beat quickly, his memory gave up its early stores, and his affections prepared themselves for the trial that was before them.

"It is better for me not to arrive," thought he, "until the family shall have returned from their daily labour, and are collected about the hearth."

In the meantime, many an impression of profound and fervid piety came over him, when he reflected upon the incontrovertible proofs of providential protection and interference which had been, during his absence from home, under his struggles, and, in his good fortune, so clearly laid before him. "Deep," he exclaimed, "is the gratitude I owe to God for this; may I never forget to acknowledge it!"

It was now about seven o'clock; the evening was calm, and the sun shone with that clear amber light which gives warmth, and the power of

exciting tenderness to natural scenery. He had already gained the ascent which commanded a view of the rich sweep of country that reposed below. There it lay—his native home—his native parish—bathed in the light and glory of the hour. Its fields were green—its rivers shining like loosened silver, its meadows already studded with hay-cocks, its green pastures covered with sheep, and its unruffled lakes reflecting the hills under which they lay. Here and there a gentleman's residence rose among the distant trees, and well did he recognise the church spire that cut into the western sky on his right. It is true, nothing of the grandeur and magnificence of nature was there; everything was simple in its beauty. The quiet charm, the serene light, the air of happiness and peace that reposed upon all he saw, stirred up a thousand tender feelings in a heart whose gentle character resembled that of the prospect which it felt so exquisitely. The smoke of a few farm-houses and cottages rose in blue graceful columns to the air, giving just that appearance of life which was necessary; and a figure or two, with lengthened shadows, moved across the fields and meadows a little below where he stood.

But our readers need not to be told, that there was *one* spot which, beyond all others, rivetted his attention. On that spot his eager eye rested long and intensely. The spell of its remembrance had clung to his early heart: he had never seen it in his dreams without weeping; and often had the agitation of his imaginary sorrow awoke

him with his eyelashes steeped in tears. He looked down on it steadily. At length he was moved with a strong sensation like grief: he sobbed twice or thrice, and the tears rolled in showers from his eyes. His gathering affections were relieved by this: he felt lighter, and in the same slow manner rode onward to his father's house.

To this there were two modes of access: one by a paved bridle-way, or *boreen,* that ran up directly before the door—the other by a green lane, that diverged from the *boreen* about a furlong below the house. He took the latter, certain that the family could not notice his approach, nor hear the noise of his horse's footsteps, until he could arrive at the very threshold. On dismounting, he felt that he could scarcely walk. He approached the door, however, as steadily as he could. He entered—and the family, who had just finished their supper, rose up, as a mark of their respect to the stranger.

"Is this," he inquired, "the house in which Dominick M'Evoy lives?"

"That's my name, Sir," replied Dominick.

"The family, I trust, are—all—well? I have been desired——but no—no—I cannot—I cannot—FATHER!—MOTHER!"

"It's *him!*" shrieked the mother—"It's himself!—Jemmy!"

"Jemmy!—Jemmy!!" shouted the father, with a cry of joy which might be heard far beyond the house.

"Jemmy!—our poor Jemmy!—Jemmy!!" exclaimed his brothers and sisters.

"Asy, childhre," said the father—"asy; let the mother to him—let *her* to him. Who has the right that *she* has? Vara, asthore—Vara, think of yourself. God of heaven! what is comin' over her?—Her brain's turned!"

"Father, don't remove her," said the son. "Leave her arms where they are: it's long since they encircled my neck before. Often—often would I have given the wealth of the universe to be encircled in my blessed and beloved mother's arms! Yes, yes!—Weep, my father—weep, each of you. You see those tears;—consider them as a proof that I have never forgotten you! Beloved mother! recollect yourself: she knows me not—her eyes wander!—I fear the shock has been too much for her. Place a chair at the door, and I will bring her to the air."

After considerable effort, the mother's faculties were restored so far as to be merely conscious that our hero was her son. She had not yet shed a tear, but now she surveyed his countenance, smiled and named him, placed her hands upon him, and examined his dress with a singular blending of conflicting emotions, but still without being thoroughly collected.

"I will speak to her," said Jemmy, "in Irish, it will go directly to her heart:—*Mhair, avourneen, tha ma, laht, anish!*—Mother, my darling, I am with you at last."

"*Shamus, aroon, vick machree, wuil thu lhum? wuil thu—wuil thu lhum?*—Jemmy, my beloved,

son of my heart, are you with me?—are you—are you with me?"

"*Ish maheen a tha in, a vair dheelish machree.* It is *I* who am with you, beloved mother of my heart!"

She smiled again—but only for a moment. She looked at him, laid his head upon her bosom, bedewed his face with her tears, and muttered out, in a kind of sweet, musical cadence, the Irish cry of joy.

We are incapable of describing this scene further. Our readers must be contented to know, that the delight and happiness of our hero's whole family were complete. Their son, after many years of toil and struggle, had at length succeeded, by a virtuous course of action, in raising them from poverty to comfort, and in effecting his own object, which was, to become a member of the Catholic priesthood. During all his trials he never failed to rely on God; and it is seldom that those who rely upon Him, when striving to attain a laudable purpose, are ever ultimately disappointed.

* * * * * * * *

We regret to inform our readers, that the poor scholar is dead! He did not, in fact, long survive the accomplishment of his wishes. But as we had the particulars of his story from his nearest friends, we thought his virtues of too exalted a nature to pass into oblivion without some record, however humble. He died as he had lived —the friend of God and of man.

TUBBER DERG.

OR, THE RED WELL

The following story owes nothing to any colouring or invention of mine; it is unhappily a true one, and to me possesses a peculiar and melancholy interest, arising from my intimate knowledge of the man whose fate it holds up as a moral lesson to Irish landlords. I knew him well, and many a day and hour have I played about his knee, and ran, in my boyhood, round his path, when as he said to himself, the world was no trouble to him.

On the south side of a sloping tract of light ground, lively, warm, and productive, stood a white, moderate-sized farm-house, which, in consequence of its conspicuous situation, was a prominent and, we may add, a graceful object in the landscape of which it formed a part. The spot whereon it stood was a swelling natural terrace, the soil of which was heavier and richer than that of the adjoining lands. On each side of the house stood a clump of old beeches, the only survivors of that species then remaining in the country. These beeches extended behind the house in a kind of angle, with opening enough at their termination to form a vista, through which its white walls glistened with beautiful ef-

fect in the calm splendour of a summer evening. Above the mound on which it stood, rose two steep hills, overgrown with furze and fern, except on their tops, which were clothed with purple heath; they were also covered with patches of broom, and studded with gray rocks, which sometimes rose singly or in larger masses, pointed or rounded into curious and fantastic shapes. Exactly between these hills the sun went down during the month of June, and nothing could be in finer relief than the rocky and picturesque outlines of their sides, as crowned with thorns and clumps of wild ash, they appeared to overhang the valley whose green foliage was gilded by the sun-beams, which lit up the scene into radiant beauty. The bottom of this natural chasm, which opened against the deep crimson of the evening sky, was nearly upon a level with the house, and completely so with the beeches that surrounded it. Brightly did the sinking sun fall upon their tops, whilst the neat white house below, in their quiet shadow, sent up its wreath of smoke among their branches, itself an emblem of contentment, industry, and innocence. It was, in fact, a lovely situation; perhaps the brighter to me, that its remembrance is associated with days of happiness and freedom from the cares of a world, which, like a distant mountain, darkens as we approach it, and only exhausts us in struggling to climb its rugged and barren paths.

There was to the south-west of this house another little hazel glen, that ended in a precipice formed by a single rock some thirty feet high,

over which tumbled a crystal cascade into a basin worn in its hard bed below. From this basin the stream murmured away through the copse-wood, until it joined a larger rivulet that passed, with many a winding, through a fine extent of meadows adjoining it. Across the foot of this glen, and past the door of the house we have described, ran a bridle road, from time immemorial; on which, as the traveller ascended it towards the house, he appeared to track his way in blood, for a chalybeate *spa* arose at its head, oozing out of the earth, and spread itself in a crimson stream over the path in every spot whereon a foot-mark could be made. From this circumstance it was called Tubber Derg, or the Red Well. In the meadow where the glen terminated, was another spring of delicious crystal; and clearly do I remember the ever-beaten path-way that led to it through the grass, and up the green field which rose in a gentle slope to the happy-looking house of Owen M'Carthy, for so was the man called who resided under its peaceful roof.

I will not crave your pardon, gentle reader, for dwelling at such length upon a scene so dear to my heart as this, because I write not now so much for your gratification as my own. Many an eve of gentle May have I pulled the May-gowans which grew about that well, and over that smooth meadow. Often have I raised my voice to its shrillest pitch, that I might hear its echoes rebounding in the bottom of the green and still glen, where silence, so to speak, was deepened by the continuous murmur of the cascade

above; and when the cuckoo uttered her first note from among the hawthorns on its side, with what trembling anxiety did I, an urchin of some eight or nine years, look under my right foot for the white hair, whose charm was such, that by keeping it about me the first female name I should hear was destined, I believed in my soul, to be that of my future wife.[56] Sweet was the song of the thrush, and mellow the whistle of the blackbird, as they rose in the stillness of evening over the "hirken shaws" and green dells of this secluded spot of rural beauty. Far, too, could the rich voice of Owen M'Carthy be heard along the hills and meadows, as, with a little chubby urchin at his knee, and another in his arms, he sat on a bench beside his own door, singing the "Trougha" in his native Irish; whilst Kathleen his wife, with her two maids, each crooning a low song, sat before the door, milking the cows, whose sweet breath mingled its perfume with the warm breeze of evening.

Owen M'Carthy was descended from a long line of honest ancestors, whose names had never, within the memory of man, been tarnished by the commission of a mean or disreputable action. They were always a kind-hearted family, but stern and proud in the common intercourse of life. They believed themselves to be, and probably were, a branch of the MacCarthy More stock; and, although only the possessors of a small farm, it was singular to observe the effect which this conviction produced upon their bearing and manners. To it might, perhaps, be at-

tributed the high and stoical integrity for which they were remarkable. This severity, however, was no proof that they wanted feeling, or were insensible to the misery and sorrows of others: in all the little cares and perplexities that chequered the peaceful neighbourhood in which they lived, they were ever the first to console, or, if necessary, to support a distressed neighbour with the means which God had placed in their possession; for, being industrious, they were seldom poor. Their words were few, but sincere, and generally promised less than the honest hearts that dictated them intended to perform. There is in some persons a hereditary feeling of just principle, the result neither of education nor of a clear moral sense, but rather a kind of instinctive honesty which descends, like a constitutional bias, from father to son, pervading every member of the family. It is difficult to define this, or to assign its due position in the scale of human virtues. It exists in the midst of the grossest ignorance, and influences the character in the absence of better principles. Such was the impress which marked so strongly the family of which I speak. No one would ever think of imputing a dishonest act to the M'Carthys; nor would any person acquainted with them, hesitate for a moment to consider their word as good as the bond of another. I do not mean to say, however, that their motives of action were not higher than this instinctive honesty; far from it: but I say, that they possessed it in *addition* to a strong

feeling of family pride, and a correct knowledge of their moral duties.

I can only take up Owen M'Carthy at that part of the past to which my memory extends. He was then a tall, fine-looking young man; silent, but kind. One of the earliest events within my recollection is his wedding; after that the glimpse of his state and circumstances are imperfect; but as I grew up, they became more connected, and I am able to remember him the father of four children; an industrious inoffensive small farmer, beloved, respected, and honoured. No man could rise, be it ever so early, who would not find Owen up before him; no man could anticipate him in an early crop, and if a widow or a sick acquaintance were unable to get in their harvest, Owen was certain to collect the neighbours to assist them; to be the first there himself, with quiet benevolence, encouraging them to a zealous performance of the friendly task in which they were engaged.

It was, I believe, soon after his marriage, that the lease of the farm held by him expired. Until that time he had been able to live with perfect independence; but even the enormous rise of one pound per acre, though it deprived him in a great degree of his usual comforts, did not sink him below the bare necessaries of life. For some years after that he could still serve a deserving neighbour; and never was the hand of Owen M'Carthy held back from the wants and distresses of those whom he knew to be honest.

I remember once an occasion upon which a widow Murray applied to him for a loan of five pounds, to prevent her two cows from being auctioned for half a year's rent, of which she only wanted that sum. Owen sat at dinner with his family when she entered the house in tears, and, as well as her agitation of mind permitted, gave him a detailed account of her embarrassment.

"The blessin' o' God be upon all here," said she, on entering.

"The double o' that to you, Rosha," replied Owen's wife: "won't you sit in an' be atin'?—here's a sate beside Nanny; come over, Rosha."

Owen only nodded to her, and continued to eat his dinner, as if he felt no interest in her distress. Rosha sat down at a distance, and with the corner of a red handkerchief to her eyes, shed tears in that bitterness of feeling which marks the helplessness of honest industry under the pressure of calamity.

"In the name o' goodness, Rosha," said Mrs. M'Carthy, "what ails you, asthore? Sure Jimmy—God spare him to you—wouldn't be dead?"

"Glory be to God! no, avourneen machree. Och, och! but it 'ud be the black sight, an' the black day, that 'ud see my brave boy, the staff of our support, an' the bread of our mouth, taken away from us!—No, no, Kathleen dear, it's not that bad wid me yet. I hope we'll never live to see his manly head laid down before us. 'Twas his own manliness, indeed, brought it an him—backin' the sack when he was bringin'

home our last meldhre[57] from the mill; for you see he should do it, the crathur, to show his strinth, an' the sack, when he got it an was too heavy for him, an' hurted the small of his back; for his bones, you see, are too young, an' hadn't time to fill up yet. No, avourneen. Glory be to God! he's gettin' betther wid me!" and the poor creature's eyes glistened with delight through her tears and the darkness of her affliction.

Without saying a word, Owen, when she finished the eulogium on her son, rose, and taking her forcibly by the shoulder, set her down at the table, on which a large potful of potatoes had been spread out, with a circle in the middle for a dish of rashers and eggs, into which dish every right hand of those about it was thrust, with a quickness that clearly illustrated the principle of competition as a stimulus to action.

"Spare your breath," said Owen, placing her rather roughly upon the seat, "an' take share of what's goin': when all's cleared off we'll hear you, but the sorra word till then."

"Musha, Owen," said the poor woman, "you're the same man still; sure we all know your ways; I'll strive, avourneen, to ate—I'll strive, asthore—to plase you, an' the Lord bless you an' yours, an' may you never be as I an' my fatherless childhre are this sorrowful day!" and she accompanied her words by a flood of tears.

Owen, without evincing the slightest sympathy, withdrew himself from the table. Not a

muscle of his face was moved; but as the cat came about his feet at the time, he put his foot under her, and flung her as easily as possible to the lower end of the kitchen.

"Arrah, what harm did the crathur do," asked his wife, "that you'd kick her for, that way? an' why but you *ate out* your dinner?"

"*I'm* done," he replied, "but that's no rason that Rosha, an' you, an' thim boys that has the work afore them, shouldn't finish your male's mate."

Poor Rosha thought that by his withdrawing he had already suspected the object of her visit, and of course concluded that her chance of succeeding was very slender.

The wife, who guessed what she wanted, as well as the nature of her suspicion, being herself as affectionate and obliging as Owen, reverted to the subject, in order to give her an opportunity of proceeding.

"Somethin' bitther an' out o' the common coorse, is a throuble to you, Rosha," said she, "or you wouldn't be in the state you're in. The Lord look down on you this day, you poor crathur—widout the father of your childhre to stand up for you, an' your only other depindance laid on the broad of his back, all as one as a cripple; but no matther, Rosha; trust to Him that can be a husband to you, an' a father to your orphans—trust to Him, an' his blessed mother in heaven, this day, an' never fear but they'll *rise* up a frind for you. Musha, Owen

ate your dinner as you ought to do, wid your capers! How can you take a spade in your hand upon that morsel?"

"Finish your own," said her husband, "an' never heed me; jist let me alone. Don't you see that if I wanted it, I'd ate it, an' what more would you have about!"

"Well, acushla, it's your own loss, sure, of a sartinty. An', Rosha, whisper, ahagur, what can Owen or I do for you? Throth, it would be a bad day we'd see you at a *deshort*[58] for a friend, for you never wor nothin' else nor a civil, oblagin' neighbour yourself; an' him that's gone before—the Lord make his bed in heaven this day—was as good a warrant as ever broke bread, to sarve a friend, if it was at the hour of midnight."

"Ah! when I had *him*," exclaimed the distracted widow, "I never had occasion to trouble aither friend or neighbour; but he's gone, an' now it's otherwise wid me—glory be to God for all his mercies—a wurrah dheelish! Why, thin, since I must spake, an' has no other frind to go to—but somehow I doubt Owen looks dark upon me—sure I'd put my hand to a stamp, if my word wouldn't do for it, an' sign the blessed crass that saved us, for the payment of it; or I'd give it to him in oats, for I hear you want some, Owen—Phatie oats it is, an' a betther shouldhered or fuller-lookin' grain never went undher a harrow—indeed, it's it that's the beauty, all out, if it's good seed you want."

"What is it for, woman alive?" inquired Owen, as he kicked a three-legged stool out of his way.

"What is it for, is it? Och, Owen darlin', sure my two brave cows is lavin' me. Owen M'Murt, the driver, is over wid me beyant, an' has them ready to set off wid. I reared them both, the two of them, wid my own hands; *Cheehoney,* that knows my voice, an' would come to me from the fardest corner o' the field, is goin', an' nothin' will we have—nothin' will my poor sick boy have—but the black wather, or the dhry salt; besides the butther of them bein' lost to us for the rent, or a small taste of it, of an odd time, for poor Jimmy. Owen, next to God, I have no friend to depind upon but yourself!"

"Me!" said Owen, as if astonished. "Phoo, that's quare enough! Now do you think, Rosha, —hut, hut, woman alive! Come, boys, you're all done; out wid you to your spades, an' finish that *meerin*[59] before night. Me!—hut, tut!"

"I have it all but five pounds, Owen, an' for the sake of him that's in his grave—an' that, maybe, is able to put up his prayer for you"

"An' what would you want *me* to do Rosha? Fitther for you to sit down an' finish your dinner, when it's before you. I'm goin' to get an' ould glove[60] that's somewhere about this chist, for I must weed out that bit of oats before night, wid a blessin'," and, as he spoke he passed into another room, as if he had altogether for-

gotten her solicitation, and in a few minutes returned.

"Owen, avick!"—an' the blessin' of the fatherless be upon you, sure, an' many a one o' them you have, any how, Owen!"

"Well, Rosha—well?"

"Och, och, Owen, it's low days wid me to be depindin' upon the sthranger? Little thim that reared me ever thought it 'ud come to this. You know I'm a dacent father's child, an' I have stooped to you, Owen M'Carthy—what I'd scorn to do to any other but yourstlf—poor an' friendless as I stand here before you. Let them take the cows, thin, from my childhre; but the father of the fatherless will support thim an' me. Och, but it's well for the O'Donohoes that their landlord lives at home among themselves, for may the heavens look down on me, I wouldn't know where to find mine, if one sight of him 'ud save me an' my childhre from the grave! The Agent even, he lives in Dublin, an' how could I lave my sick boy an' small *girshas* by themselves, to go a hundre miles, an' maybe not see him afther all. Little hopes I'd have from him, even if I did; he's paid for gatherin' in his rents; but it's well known he wants the touch of nathur for the sufferins of the poor, an' of them that's honest in their intintions."

"I'll go over wid you, Rosha, if that will be of any use," replied Owen, composedly; "come, I'll go an' spake to Frank M'Murt."

"The sorra blame I blame him, Owen," replied Rosha, "his bread's depindin' upon the

likes of sich doins, an' he can't get over it; but a word from you, Owen, will save me, for who ever refused to take the word of a M'Carthy?"

When Owen and the widow arrived at the house of the latter, they found the situation of the bailiff laughable in the extreme. Her eldest son, who had been confined to his bed by a hurt received in his back, was up, and had got the unfortunate driver, who was rather old, wedged in between the dresser and the wall, where his cracked voice—for he was asthmatic—was raised to the highest pitch, calling for assistance. Beside him was a large tub half-filled with water, into which the little ones were emptying small jugs, carried at the top of their speed from a puddle before the door. In the meantime, Jemmy was tugging at the bailiff with all his strength—fortunately for that personage, it was but little—with the most sincere intention of inverting him into the tub which contained as much muddy water as would have been sufficient to make him a subject for the deliberation of a coroner and twelve honest men. Nothing could be more conscientiously attempted than the task which Jemmy had proposed to execute; every tug brought out his utmost strength, and when he failed in pulling down the bailiff, he compensated himself for his want of success, by cuffing his ribs, and peeling his shins by hard kicks; whilst from those open points which the driver's grapple with his man naturally exposed, were inflicted on him by the rejoicing urchins, numberless punches of tongs, potato-washers,

and sticks whose points were from time to time hastily thrust into the coals, that they might more effectually either blind or disable him in some other manner.

As one of the little ones ran out to fill his jug, he spied his mother and Owen approaching, on which, with the empty vessel in his hand, he flew towards them, his little features distorted by glee and ferocity, wildly mixed up together.

"Oh mudher, mudher—ha, ha, ha!—don't come in yet; don't come in, Owen, till Jimmy, an' huz, an' the Denisses, gets the Bailie drownded. We'll soon have the *bot*[61] full; but Paddy an' Jack Denis have the eyes a'most pucked out of him; an' Katty's takin' the rapin' hook from behind the *cuppel,* to get it about his neck."

Owen and the widow entered with all haste, precisely at the moment when Frank's head was dipped, for the first time, into the vessel.

"Is it goin' to murdher him ye are?" said Owen, as he seized Jemmy with a grasp that transferred him to the opposite end of the house; "hould back ye pack of young devils, an' let the man up. What did he come to do but his duty? I tell you, Jimmy, if you wor *at* yourself, an' in full strinth, that you'd have the man's blood on you where you stand, and would suffer as you ought to do for it."

"There let me," replied the lad, his eyes glowing, and his veins swollen with passion; "I don't care if I did. It would be no sin, an' no disgrace, to hang for the like of him; dacenter to

do that, than stale a creel of turf, or a wisp of straw, 'tanny rate."

In the meantime the bailiff had raised his head out of the water, and presented a visage which it was impossible to view with gravity. The widow's anxiety prevented her from seeing it in a ludicrous light; but Owen's severe face assumed a grave smile, as the man shook himself, and attempted to comprehend the nature of his situation. The young urchins, who had fallen back at the appearance of Owen and the widow, now burst into a peal of mirth, in which, however, Jemmy, whose fiercer passions had been roused, did not join.

"Frank M'Murt," said the widow, "I take the mother of heaven to witness, that it vexes my heart to see you get sich thratement in my place; an' I wouldn't for the best cow I have that sich a *brieuliagh*[62] happened. *Dher charp agus manim,*[63] Jimmy, but I'll make you suffer for drawin' down this upon my head, and me had enough over it afore."

"I don't care," replied Jemmy; "whoever comes to take our property from us, an' us willin' to work, will suffer for it. Do you think I'd see thim crathurs at their dhry phatie, an' our cows standin' in a pound for no rason? No; high hangin' to me, but I'll split to the scull the first man that takes them; an' all I'm sorry for is, that it's not the vagabone Landlord himself that's near me. That's our thanks for payin' many a good pound, in honesty an' dacency, to him an' his; lavin' us to a schamin'

Agent, an' not even to that same, but to his undher-strappers, that's robbin' us on both sides between them. May hard fortune attind him, for a landlord! You may tell him this, Frank, —that his wisest plan is to keep clear of the counthry. Sure, it's a gambler he is, they say; an' we must be harrished an' racked to support his villany! But wait a bit; maybe there's a good time comin', when we'll pay our money to thim that won't be too proud to hear our complaints wid their own ears, an' who won't turn us over to a divil's limb of an Agent. *He* had need, any how, to get his coffin sooner nor he thinks. What signifies hangin' in a good cause?" said he, as the tears of keen indignation burst from his glowing eyes. "It's a dacent death, an' a happy death, when it's for the right," he added—for his mind was evidently fixed upon the contemplation of those means of redress, which the habits of the country, and the prejudices of the people, present to them in the first moments of passion.

"It's well that Frank's one of ourselves," replied Owen, coolly, "otherwise, Jemmy, you said words that would lay you up by the heels. As for you, Frank, you must look over this. The boy's the son of dacent poor parents, an' it's a new thing for him to see the cows druv from the place. The poor fellow's vexed, too, that he has been so long laid up wid a sore back; an' so you see one thing or another has put him through other. Jimmy is warm-hearted afther all, an' will be sorry for it when he cools, an'

remimbers that *you* wor only doin' your duty."

"But what am I to do about the cows? Sure, I can't go back widout either thim or the rint?" said Frank, with a look of fear and trembling at Jemmy.

"The cows!" said another of the widow's sons who then came in; "why, you dirty spalpeen of a rip, you may whistle on the wrong side o' your mouth for them. I *druv* them off of the estate; an' now take them, if you dar! It's conthrairy to law," said the urchin; "an' if you'd touch them, I'd make my mudher sarve you wid a *lattitat*, or a *fiery-flashes*."

This was a triumph to the youngsters, who began to shake their little fists at him, and to exclaim in a chorus—"Ha, you dirty rip! wait till we get you out o' the house, an' if we don't put you from ever drivin'! Why, but you work like another?—ha, you'll get it!"—and every little fist was shook in vengeance at him.

"Whisht wid ye," said Jemmy to the little ones: "let him alone, he got enough. There's the cows for you; an' keen may the curse o' the widow an' orphans light upon you, and upon them that sent you, from first to last!—an' that's the *best* we wish you!"

"Frank," said Owen to the bailiff, "is there any one in the town below that will take the rint, an' give a resate for it? Do you think, man, that the neighbours of an honest, industrious woman 'ud see the cattle taken out of her byre for a thrifle? Hut tut! no man alive—

no sich thing! There's not a man in the parish, wid manes to do it, would see them taken away to be canted, at only about a fourth part of their value. Hut, tut,—no!"

As the sterling fellow spoke, the cheeks of the widow were suffused with tears, and her son Jemmy's hollow eyes once more kindled, but with a far different expression from that which but a few minutes before flashed from them.

"Owen," said he, and utterance nearly failed him: "Owen, if *I* was well, it wouldn't be as it is wid us; but—no, indeed, it would not: but —may God bless you for this! Owen, never fear but you'll be paid; may God bless you, Owen!"

As he spoke the hand of his humble benefactor was warmly grasped in his. A tear fell upon it: for with one of those quick and fervid transitions of feeling so peculiar to the people, he now felt a strong, generous emotion of gratitude, mingled, perhaps, with a sense of wounded pride, on finding the poverty of their little family so openly exposed.

"Hut, tut, Jimmy, avick," said Owen, who understood his feelings; "phoo, man alive! hut —hem!—why, sure, it's nothin' at all, at all, anybody would do it—only a bare five-an'-twenty shillins, [it was five pound]:—any neighbour—Mick Cassidy, Jack Moran, or Pether M'Cullagh, would do it.—Come, Frank, step out; the money's to the fore. Rosha, put your cloak about you, and let us go down to the Agint, or clerk, or whatsomever he is—sure,

that makes no maxim anyhow;—I suppose he has power to give a resate. Jemmy, go to bed again, you're pale, poor bouchal; and, childhre, ye crathurs ye, the cows won't be taken from ye this bout.—Come, in the name of God, let us go, and see everything rightified at once—hut, tut—come."

Many similar details of Owen M'Carthy's useful life could be given, in which he bore an equally benevolent and Christian part. Poor fellow he was, ere long brought low; but, to the credit of our peasantry, much as is said about their barbarity, he was treated, when helpless, with gratitude, pity, and kindness.

Until the peace of 1814, Owen's regular and systematic industry enabled him to struggle successfully against a weighty rent and sudden depression in the price of agricultural produce; that is, he was able, by the unremitting toil of a man remarkable alike for an unbending spirit and a vigorous frame of body, to pay his rent with tolerable regularity. It is true, a change began to be visible in his personal appearance, in his farm, in the dress of his children, and in the economy of his household. Improvements, which adequate capital would have enabled him to effect, were left either altogether unattempted, or in an imperfect state, resembling neglect, though, in reality, the result of poverty. His dress at mass, and in fairs and markets, had, by degrees, lost that air of comfort and warmth which bespeak the independent

farmer. The evidences of embarrassment began to disclose themselves in many small points—inconsiderable, it is true, but not the less significant. His house, in the progress of his declining circumstances, ceased to be annually ornamented by a new coat of whitewash; it soon assumed a faded and yellowish hue, and sparkled not in the setting sun as in the days of Owen's prosperity. It had, in fact, a wasted, unthriving look, like its master. The thatch became black and rotten upon its roof; the chimneys sloped to opposite points; the windows were less neat, and, ultimately, when broken, were patched with a couple of leaves from the children's blotted copy-books. His out-houses also began to fail. The neatness of his little farm-yard, and the cleanliness which marked so conspicuously the space fronting his dwelling-house, disappeared in the course of time. Filth began to accumulate where no filth had been; his garden was not now planted so early, nor with such taste and neatness as before; his crops were later, and less abundant; his haggarts neither so full nor so trim as they were wont to be, nor his ditches and enclosures kept in such good repair. His cars, ploughs, and other farming implements, instead of being put under cover, were left exposed to the influence of wind and weather, where they soon became crazy and useless.

Such, however, were only the slighter symptoms of his bootless struggle against the general

embarrassment into which the agricultural interests were, year after year, so unhappily sinking.

Had the tendency to general distress among the class to which he belonged become stationary, Owen would have continued by toil and incessant exertion to maintain his ground; but, unfortunately, there was no point at which the national depression could then stop. Year after year produced deeper, more extensive, and more complicated misery; and when he hoped that every succeeding season would bring an improvement in the market, he was destined to experience not merely a fresh disappointment, but an unexpected depreciation in the price of his corn, butter, and other disposable commodities.

When a nation is reduced to such a state, no eye but that of God himself can see the appalling wretchedness to which a year of disease and scarcity strikes down the poor and working classes.

Owen, after a long and noble contest for nearly three years, sank, at length, under the united calamities of disease and scarcity. The father of the family was laid low upon the bed of sickness, and those of his little ones who escaped it were almost consumed by famine. This two-fold shock sealed his ruin; his honest heart was crushed—his hardy frame shorn of its strength, and he to whom every neighbour fled as to a friend, now required friendship at a moment when the wide-spread poverty of the country rendered its assistance hopeless.

On rising from his bed of sickness, the prospect before him required his utmost fortitude to bear. He was now wasted in energy both of mind and body, reduced to utter poverty, with a large family of children, too young to assist him, without means of retrieving his circumstances, his wife and himself gaunt skeletons, his farm neglected, his house wrecked, and his offices falling to ruin, yet every day bringing the half-year's term nearer! Oh, ye who riot on the miseries of such men—ye who roll round the easy circle of fashionable life, think upon this picture! Ye vile and heartless landlords, who see not, hear not, know not those to whose heart-breaking toil ye owe the only merit ye possess—that of rank in society—come and contemplate this virtuous man, as unfriended, unassisted, and uncheered by those who are bound by a strong moral duty to protect and aid him, he looks shuddering into the dark cheerless future! Is it to be wondered at that he, and such as he, should, in the misery of his despair, join the nightly meetings, be lured to associate himself with the incendiary, or seduced to grasp, in the stupid apathy of wretchedness, the weapon of the murderer? By neglecting the people, by draining them, with merciless rapacity, of the means of life; by goading them on under a cruel system of rack rents, ye become not their natural benefactors, but curses and scourges, nearly as much in reality as ye are in their opinion.

When Owen rose, he was driven by hunger,

direct and immediate, to sell his best cow; and having purchased some oatmeal at an enormous price, from a well-known devotee in the parish, who hoarded up this commodity for a "dear summer," he laid his plans for the future, with as much judgment as any man could display. One morning after breakfast he addressed his wife as follows:

"Kathleen, mavourneen, I want to consult wid you about what we ought to do; things are low wid us, asthore; and except our heavenly Father puts it into the heart of them I'm goin' to mention, I don't know what we'll do, nor what'll become of these poor crathurs that's naked and hungry about us. God pity them, they don't know—and maybe that same's some comfort—the hardships that's before them. Poor crathurs! see how quiet and sorrowful they sit about their little play, passin' the time for themselves as well as they can! Alley, acushla machree, come over to me. Your hair is bright and fair, Alley, and curls so purtily that the finest lady in the land might envy it; but, acushla, your colour's gone, your little hands are wasted away, too; that sickness was hard and sore upon you, *a colleen machree,*[64] and he that 'ud spend his heart's blood for you, darlin', can do nothin' to help you!"

He looked at the child as he spoke, and a slight motion in the muscles of his face was barely perceptible, but it passed away; and, after kissing her, he proceeded:—

"Ay, ye crathurs—you an I, Kathleen, could

earn our bread for ourselves yet, but these can't do it. This last stroke, darlin', has laid us at the door of both poverty and sickness, but blessed be the mother of heaven for it, they are all left wid us; and sure that's a blessin' we've to be thankful for—glory be to God!"

"Ay, poor things, it's well to have them spared, Owen dear; sure I'd rather a thousand times beg from door to door, and have my childher to look at, than be in comfort widout them."

"Beg: that 'ud go hard wid me, Kathleen. I'd work—I'd live on next to nothing all the year round; but to see the crathurs that wor dacently bred up brought to *that,* I couldn't bear it, Kathleen—'twould break the heart widin in me. Poor as they are, they have the blood of kings in their veins; and, besides, to see a M'Carthy beggin' his bread in the counthry where his name was once great—The M'Carthy More, that was their title—no, acushla; I love them as I do the blood in my own veins; but I'd rather see them in the arms of God in heaven, laid down dacently, with their little sorrowful faces washed, and their little bodies stretched out purtily before my eyes—I would—in the grave-yard there beyant, where all belonging to me lie, than have it cast up to them, or have it said, that ever a M'Carthy was seen beggin' on the highway."

"But, Owen, can you strike out no plan for us that 'ud put us in the way of comin' round agin? These poor ones, if we could hould out

for two or three year, would soon be able to help us."

"They would—they would. I'm thinkin' this day or two of a plan: but I'm doubtful whether it 'ud come to anything."

"What is it, acushla? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, any way."

"I'm goin' to go to Dublin. I'm tould that the landlord's come home from France, and that he's there now; and if I didn't see him, sure I could see the agent. Now, Kathleen, my intintion 'ud be to lay our case before the head landlord himself, in hopes he might hould back his hand, and spare us for a while. If I had a line from the agent, or a scrape of a pen, that I could show at home to some of the nabours, who knows but I could borry what 'ud set us up agin! I think many of them 'ud be sorry to see me turned out; eh, Kathleen?"

The Irish are an imaginative people; indeed too much so, for either their individual or national happiness. And it is this and superstition, which also depends much upon imagination, that makes them so easily influenced by those extravagant dreams that are held out to them by persons who understand their character.

When Kathleen heard the plan on which Owen founded his expectations of assistance, her dark melancholy eye flashed with a portion of its former fire; a transient vivacity lit up her sickly features, and she turned a smile of hope and affection upon her children, then upon Owen.

"Arrah, thin, who knows, indeed!—who

knows but he might do something for us? And maybe we might be as well as ever yet! May the Lord put it into his heart, this day! I declare, ay!—maybe it was God put it into *your* heart, Owen!"

"I'll set off," replied her husband, who was a man of decision; "I'll set off on other morrow mornin'; and as nobody knows anything about it, so let there not be a word said upon the subject, good or bad. If I have success, well and good; but if not, why nobody need be the wiser."

The heart-broken wife evinced, for the remainder of the day, a lightness of spirits which she had not felt for many a month before. Even Owen was less depressed than usual, and employed himself in making such arrangements as he knew would occasion his family to feel the inconvenience of his absence less acutely. But as the hour of his departure drew nigh, a sorrowful feeling of affection rising into greater strength and tenderness threw a melancholy gloom around his heart. According to their simple view of distance, a journey to Dublin was a serious undertaking, and to them it was such. Owen was in weak health, just risen out of illness, and what was more trying than any other consideration was, that since their marriage they had never been separated before.

On the morning of his departure, he was up before daybreak, and so were his wife and children, for the latter had heard the conversation already detailed between them, and, with their

simple-minded parents, enjoyed the gleam of hope which it presented; but this soon changed —when he was preparing to go, an indefinite sense of fear, and a more vivid clinging of affection marked their feelings. He himself partook of this, and was silent, depressed, and less ardent than when the speculation first presented itself to his mind. His resolution, however, was taken, and should he fail, no blame at a future time could be attached to himself. It was the last effort; and to neglect it, he thought, would have been to neglect his duty. When breakfast was ready, they all sat down in silence; the hour was yet early, and a rushlight was placed in a wooden candlestick that stood beside them to afford light. There was something solemn and touching in the group as they sat in dim relief, every face marked by the traces of sickness, want, sorrow, and affection. The father attempted to eat, but could not; Kathleen sat at the meal, but could taste nothing; the children ate, for hunger at the moment was predominant over every other sensation. At length it was over, and Owen rose to depart; he stood for a minute on the floor, and seemed to take a survey of his cold, cheerless house, and then of his family; he cleared his throat several times, but did not speak.

"Kathleen," said he, at length, "in the name of God I'll go; and may his blessin' be about you, asthore machree, and guard you and these darlins till I come back to yez."

Kathleen's faithful heart could bear no more;

she laid herself on his bosom—clung to his neck, and, as the parting kiss was given, she wept aloud, and Owen's tears fell silently down his worn cheeks. The children crowded about them in loud wailings, and the grief of this virtuous and afflicted family was of that profound description, which is ever the companion, in such scenes, of pure and genuine love.

"Owen!" she exclaimed; "Owen, *a-suilish mahuil agus machree!*[65] I doubt we wor wrong in thinkin' of this journey. How can you, mavourneen, walk all the way to Dublin, and you so worn and weakly wid that sickness, and the bad feedin' both before and since? Och, give it up, achree, and stay wid us, let what will happen. You're not able for sich a journey, indeed you're not. Stay wid me and the childher, Owen; sure we'd be so lonesome widout you—will you, agrah? and the Lord will do for us some other way, maybe."

Owen pressed his faithful wife to his heart, and kissed her chaste lips with a tenderness which the heartless votaries of fashionable life can never know.

"Kathleen, asthore," he replied, in those terms of endearment which flow so tenderly through the language of the people; "sure whin I remimber your fair young face—your yellow hair, and the light that was in your eyes, acushla machree—but that's gone long ago—och, don't ax me to stop. Isn't your lightsome laugh, whin you wor young, in my ears? and your step that 'ud not bend the flower of the field—Kathleen,

I can't, indeed I can't, bear to think of what you wor, nor of what you are now, when in the coorse of age and natur, but a small change ought to be upon you! Sure I ought to make every struggle to take you and these sorrowful crathurs out of the state you're in."

The children flocked about them, and joined their entreaties to those of their mother. "Father, don't lave us—we'll be lonesome if you go, and if my mother 'ud get unwell, who'd be to take care of her? Father, don't lave your own 'weeny crathurs,' (a pet name he had for them)—maybe the meal 'ud be eat out before you'd come back; or maybe something 'ud happen you in that strange place."

"Indeed, there's truth in what they say, Owen," said the wife; "do be said by your own Kathleen for this time, and don't take sich a long journey upon you. Afther all, maybe, you wouldn't see him—sure the nabours will help us, if you could only humble yourself to ax them!"

"Kathleen," said Owen, "when this is past you'll be glad I went—indeed you will; sure it's only the tindher feelin' of your hearts, darlins. Who knows what the landlord may do when I see himself, and show him these resates—every penny paid him by our own family. Let me go, acushla; it *does* cut me to the heart to lave yez the way yez are in, even for a while; but it's far worse to see your poor wasted faces, widout havin' it in my power to do anything for yez."

He then kissed them again, one by one; and

pressing the affectionate partner of his sorrows to his breaking heart, he bade God bless them, and set out in the twilight of a bitter March morning. He had not gone many yards from the door when little Alley ran after him in tears; he felt her hand upon the skirts of his coat, which she plucked with a smile of affection that neither tears nor sorrow could repress. "Father, kiss *me* again," said she. He stooped down and kissed her tenderly. The child then ascended a green ditch, and Owen, as he looked back, saw her standing upon it; her fair tresses were tossed by the blast about her face, as with straining eyes she watched him receding from her view. Kathleen and the other children stood at the door, and also with deep sorrow watched his form, until the angle of the bridle-road rendered him no longer visible; after which they returned slowly to the fire and wept bitterly.

We believe no men are capable of bearing greater toil or privation than the Irish. Owen's *viaticum* was only two or three oaten cakes tied in a little handkerchief, and a few shillings in silver to pay for his bed. With this small stock of food and money, an oaken stick in his hand, and his wife's kerchief tied about his waist, he undertook a journey of one hundred and ten miles, in quest of a landlord who, so far from being acquainted with the distresses of his tenantry, scarcely knew even their names, and not of them in person.

Our scene now changes to the metropolis.

One evening, about half past six o'clock, a toil-worn man turned his steps to a splendid mansion in Mountjoy Square; his appearance was drooping, fatigued, and feeble. As he went along, he examined the numbers on the respective doors, until he reached a certain *one*—before which he stopped for a moment; he then stepped out upon the street, and looked through the windows, as if willing to ascertain whether there was any chance of his object being attained. Whilst in this situation a carriage rolled rapidly up, and stopped with a sudden check that nearly threw back the horses on their haunches. In an instant the thundering knock of the servant intimated the arrival of some person of rank; the hall door was opened, and Owen, availing himself of that opportunity, entered the hall. Such a visitor, however, was too remarkable to escape notice. The hand of the menial was rudely placed against his breast; and, as the usual impertinent interrogatories were put to him, the pampered ruffian kept pushing him back, until the afflicted man stood upon the upper step leading to the door.

"For the sake of God, let me spake but two words to him. I'm his tenant; and I know he's too much of a jintleman to turn away a man that has lived upon his honor's estate, father and son, for upwards of three hundre years. My name's Owen——"

"You can't see him, my good fellow, at this hour. Go to Mr. M——, his Agent: we have company to dinner. He never speaks to a ten-

ant on business; his Agent manages all that. Please, leave the way, here's more company."

As he uttered the last word, he pushed Owen back; who, forgetting that the stairs were behind him, fell,—received a severe cut, and was so completely stunned, that he lay senseless and bleeding. Another carriage drove up, as the fellow, now much alarmed, attempted to raise him from the steps; and, by order of the gentleman who came in it, he was brought into the hall. The circumstance now made some noise. It was whispered about, that one of Mr. S.——'s tenants, a drunken fellow from the country, wanted to break in forcibly to see him; but then it was also asserted, that his scull was broken, and that he lay dead in the hall. Several of the gentlemen above stairs, on hearing that a man had been killed, immediately assembled about him, and, by the means of restoratives, he soon recovered, though the blood streamed copiously from the wound in the back of his head.

"Who are you, my good man?" said Mr. S——

Owen looked about him rather vacantly; but soon collected himself, and replied in a mournful and touching tone of voice—"I'm one of your honor's tenants from Tubber Derg; my name is Owen M'Carthy, your honor—that is, if you be Mr. S——"

"And, pray, what brought you to town, M'Carthy?"

"I wanted to make an humble appale to your honor's feelins, in regard of my bit of farm.

I, and my poor family, your honor, have been broken down by hard times and the sickness of the sason—God knows how *they* are."

"If you wish to speak to me about that, my good man, you must know I refer all these matters to my Agent. Go to him—he knows them best; and whatever is right and proper to be done for you, he will do it. Sinclair, give him a crown, and send him to the —— Dispensary, to get his head dressed. I say, Carthy, go to my Agent; he knows whether your claim is just or not, and will attend to it accordingly."

"Plase your honor, I've been wid him, and he says he can do nothin' whatsomever for me. I went two or three times, and couldn't see him, he was so busy; and, when I did get a word or two wid him, he tould me there was more offered for my land than I'm payin'; and that if I did not pay up, I must be put out, God help me!"

"But I tell you, Carthy, I never interfere between him and my tenants."

"Och, indeed! and it would be well both for your honor's tenants and yourself, if you did, Sir. Your honor ought to know, Sir, more about us, and how we're thrated. I'm an honest man, Sir, and I tell you so for your good."

"And pray, Sir," said the Agent, stepping forward, for he had arrived a few minutes before, and heard the last observation of M'Carthy —"pray how are they treated, you that know so well, and are so honest a man?—As for honesty, you might have referred to me for that, I think," he added.

"Mr. M——," said Owen, "we're thrated very badly. Sir, you needn't look at me, for I'm not afeerd to spake the thruth; no bullyin', Sir, will make me say anything in your favour that you don't desarve. You've broken the half of them by severity; you've turned the tenants against yourself and his honor here; and I tell you now, though you're to the fore, that, in the coorse of a short time, there'll be bad work upon the estate, except his honor, here, looks into his own affairs, and hears the complaints of the people. Look at these resates, yer honor; they'll show you, Sir,——"

"Carthy, I can hear no such language against the gentleman to whom I entrust the management of my property; of course, I refer the matter solely to him. I can do nothing in it."

"Kathleen, avourneen!" exclaimed the poor man, as he looked up despairingly to heaven; "and ye, poor darlins of my heart! is this the news I'm to have for yez whin I go home?—As you hope for mercy, Sir, don't turn away your ear from my petition, that I'd humbly make to *yourself*. Cowld, and hunger, and hardship, are at home before me, yer honor. If you'd be plased to look at these resates, you'd see that I always paid my rint; and 'twas sickness and the hard times——"

"And your own honesty, industry, and good conduct," said the Agent, giving a dark and malignant sneer at him. "Carthy, it shall be my business to see that you do not spread a bad spirit through the tenantry much longer.—Sir,

you have heard the fellow's admission. It is an implied threat that he will give us much serious trouble. There is not such another incendiary on your property—not one, upon my honour."

"Sir," said a servant, "dinner is on the table."

"Sinclair," said his landlord, "give him another crown, and tell him to trouble me no more." Saying which, he and the Agent went up to the drawing-room, and, in a moment, Owen saw a large party sweep down stairs, full of glee and vivacity, by whom both himself and his distresses were as completely forgotten as if they had never existed.

He now slowly departed, and knew not whether the house-steward had given him money or not until he felt it in his hand. A cold, sorrowful weight lay upon his heart; the din of the town deadened his affliction into a stupor; but an overwhelming sense of his disappointment, and a conviction of the Agent's diabolical falsehood, entered like barbed arrows into his heart.

On leaving the steps, he looked up to heaven in the distraction of his agonising thoughts; the clouds were black and lowering—the wind stormy—and, as it carried them on its dark wing along the sky, he wished, if it were the will of God, that his head lay in the quiet grave-yard where the ashes of his forefathers reposed in peace. But he again remembered his Kathleen and their children; and the large tears of anguish, deep and bitter, rolled slowly down his cheeks.

We will not trace him into an hospital, whither the wound on his head occasioned him to be sent,

but simply state, that, on the second week after this, a man, with his head bound in a handkerchief, lame, bent, and evidently labouring under severe illness or great affliction, might be seen toiling slowly up the little hill that commanded a view of Tubber Derg. On reaching the top he sat down to rest for a few minutes, but his eye was eagerly turned to the house which contained all that was dear to him on this earth. The sun was setting, and shone, with half his disk visible, in that dim and cheerless splendour which produces almost in every temperament a feeling of melancholy. His house which, in happier days, formed so beautiful and conspicuous an object in the view, was now, from the darkness of its walls, scarcely discernible. The position of the sun, too, rendered it more difficult to be seen; and Owen, for it was he, shaded his eyes with his hand, to survey it more distinctly. Many a harrowing thought and remembrance passed through his mind, as his eye traced its dim outline in the fading light. He had done his duty—he had gone to the fountain-head, with a hope that his simple story of affliction might be heard; but all was fruitless: the only gleam of hope that opened upon their misery had now passed into darkness and despair for ever. He pressed his aching forehead with distraction as he thought of this; then clasped his hands bitterly, and groaned aloud.

At length he rose, and proceeded with great difficulty, for the short rest had stiffened his weak and fatigued joints. As he approached

home his heart sank; and as he ascended the blood-red stream which covered the bridle-way that led to his house, what with fatigue and affliction, his agitation weakened him so much that he stopped, and leaned on his staff several times, that he might take breath.

"It's too dark maybe for them to see me, or poor Kathleen would send the darlins to give me the *she dha veha.*[66] Kathleen, avourneen machree! how my heart beats wid longin' to see you, asthore, and to see the weeny crathurs—glory be to Him that has left *them* to me—praise and glory to His name!"

He was now within a few perches of the door; but a sudden misgiving shot across his heart when he saw it shut, and no appearance of smoke from the chimney, nor of stir or life about the house. He advanced—

"Mother of glory, what's this!—But, wait, let me rap agin. Kathleen, Kathleen!—are you widin, avourneen? Owen—Alley—arn't ye widin, childhre? Alley, sure I'm come back to you all!" and he rapped more loudly than before. A dark breeze swept through the bushes as he spoke, but no voice nor sound proceeded from the house;—all was still as death within. "Alley!" he called once more to his little favourite; "I'm come home wid something for *you,* asthore! I didn't forget *you,* alanna!—I brought it from Dublin all the way. Alley!" but the gloomy murmur of the blast was the only reply.

Perhaps the most intense of all that he knew

as misery was that which he then felt; but this state of suspense was soon terminated by the appearance of a neighbour who was passing.

"Why, thin, Owen, but yer welcome home agin, my poor fellow; and I'm sorry that I haven't betther news for you, and so are all of us."

He whom he addressed had almost lost the power of speech:—

"Frank," said he, and he wrung his hand. "What—what? was death among them? For the sake of heaven, spake!"

The severe pressure which he received in return ran like a shock of paralysis to his heart. "Owen, you must be a man; every one pities yez, and may the Almighty pity and support yez! She is, indeed, Owen, gone; the weeny fair-haired child, your favourite Alley, is gone. Yestherday she was berrid; and dacently the nabours attinded the place, and sent in, as far as they had it, both mate and dhrink to Kathleen and the other ones. Now, Owen, you've heard it; trust in God, an' be a man."

A deep and convulsive throe shook him to the heart. "Gone!—the fair-haired one!—Alley!—Alley!—the pride of both our hearts; the sweet, the quiet, and the sorrowful child, that seldom played wid the rest, but kept wid mys——! Oh, my darlin', my darlin'! gone from my eyes for ever!—God of glory; won't you support me this night of sorrow and misery!" With a sudden yet profound sense of humility, he dropped on his knees at the threshold, and, as the tears rolled

down his convulsed cheeks, exclaimed, in a burst of sublime piety, not at all uncommon among our peasantry—"I thank you, O my God! I thank you, an' I put myself an' my weeny ones, my *pastchee boght,*[67] into your hands. I thank you, O God, for what has happened! Keep me up and support me—och, I want it! You loved the weeny one, and you took her; she was the light of my eyes, and the pulse of my broken heart, but you took her, blessed Father of heaven! an' we can't be angry wid you for so doin'! Still if you had spared *her*—if—if—O, blessed Father, my heart was *in* the *very* one you took—but I thank you, O God? May she rest in pace, now and for ever, Amin!"

He then rose up, and slowly wiping the tears from his eyes, departed.

"Let me hould your arm, Frank, dear," said he, "I'm weak and tired wid a long journey. Och, an' can it be that she's gone—the fair-haired colleen! When I was lavin' home, an' had kissed them all—'twas the first time we ever parted, Kathleen and I, since our marriage—the blessed child came over an' held up her mouth, sayin', 'Kiss *me* agin, father;' an' this was afther herself an' all of them had kissed me afore. But, och! oh! blessed Mother! Frank, where's my Kathleen and the rest?—and why are they out of their own poor place?"

"Owen, I tould you a while agone, that you must be a man. I gave you the worst news first, an' what's to come doesn't signify much. It was too dear; for if any man could live upon it you

could:—you have neither house nor home, Owen, nor land. An ordher came from the Agint; your last cow was taken, so was all you had in the world—hem—barrin' a thrifle. No,—bad manners to it! no,—you're not widout *a home,* anyway. The family's in my barn, brave and comfortable, compared to what your own house was, that let in the wather through the roof like a sieve; and, while the same barn's to the fore, never say you want a home."

"God bless you, Frank, for that goodness to them and me; if you're not rewarded for it here, you will in a betther place. Och, I long to see Kathleen and the childher! But I'm fairly broken down, Frank, and hardly able to mark the ground; and, indeed, no wondher, if you knew but all: still, let God's will be done! Poor Kathleen, I must bear up afore her, or she'll break her heart; for I know how she loved the goolden-haired darlin' that's gone from us. Och, and how did she go, Frank, for I left her betther?"

"Why, the poor girsha took a relapse, and wasn't strong enough to bear up aginst the last attack; but it's one comfort that you know she's happy."

Owen stood for a moment, and, looking solemnly in his neighbour's face, exclaimed, in a deep and exhausted voice, "Frank!"

"What are you goin' to say, Owen?"

"The heart widin in me's broke—broke!"

The large tears rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks, and he proceeded in silence to the house

of his friend. There was, however, a feeling of sorrow in his words and manner which Frank could not withstand. He grasped Owen's hand, and, in a low and broken voice, simply said—"Keep your spirits up—keep them up."

When they came to the barn in which his helpless family had taken up their temporary residence, Owen stood for a moment to collect himself; but he was nervous, and trembled with repressed emotion. They then entered; and Kathleen, on seeing her beloved and affectionate husband, threw herself on his bosom, and for some time felt neither joy nor sorrow—she had swooned. The poor man embraced her with a tenderness at once mournful and deep. The children, on seeing their father safely returned, forgot their recent grief, and clung about him with gladness and delight. In the mean time Kathleen recovered, and Owen for many minutes could not check the loud and clamorous grief, now revived by the presence of her husband, with which the heart-broken and emaciated mother deplored her departed child; and Owen himself, on once more looking among the little ones, on seeing her little frock hanging up, and her stool vacant by the fire—on missing her voice and her blue laughing eyes—and remembering the affectionate manner in which, as with a presentiment of death, she held up her little mouth and offered him the last kiss—he slowly pulled the toys and cakes he had purchased for her out of his pocket, surveyed them for a moment, and then, putting his hands on his face, bent his head

upon his bosom, and wept with the vehement outpouring of a father's sorrow.

The reader perceives that he was a meek man; that his passions were not dark nor violent; he bore no revenge to those who neglected or injured him, and in this he differed from too many of his countrymen. No; his spirit was broken down with sorrow, and had not room for the fiercer and more destructive passions. His case excited general pity. Whatever his neighbours could do to soothe him and alleviate his affliction was done. His farm was not taken; for fearful threats were held out against those who might venture to occupy it. In these threats he had nothing to do; on the contrary, he strongly deprecated them. Their existence, however, was deemed by the Agent sufficient to justify him in his callous and malignant severity towards him.

We did not write this story for effect. Our object was to relate facts that occurred. In Ireland, there is much blame justly attached to landlords, for their neglect and severity, in such depressed times, towards their tenants: there is also much that is not only indefensible but atrocious on the part of the tenants. But can the landed proprietors of Ireland plead ignorance or want of education for their neglect and rapacity, whilst the crimes of the tenants, on the contrary, may in general be ascribed to both? He who lives—as, perhaps, his forefathers have done—upon any man's property, and fails from unavoidable calamity, has as just and clear a right to assistance from the landlord as if the amount

of that aid were a bonded debt. Common policy, common sense, and common justice, should induce the Irish landlords to lower their rents according to the market for agricultural produce, otherwise poverty, famine, crime, and vague political speculations, founded upon idle hopes of a general transfer of property, will spread over and convulse the kingdom. Any man who looks into our poverty, may see that our landlords ought to reduce their rents to a standard suitable to the times, and to the ability of the tenant.

But to return. Owen, for another year, struggled on for his family, without success; his firm spirit *was* broken; employment he could not get, and even had it been regular, he would have found it impracticable to support his helpless wife and children by his labour. The next year unhappily was also one of sickness and of want; the country was not only a wide waste of poverty, but overspread with typhus fever. One Saturday night he and the family found themselves without food; they had not tasted a morsel for twenty-four hours. There were murmurings and tears, and finally, a low conversation among them, as if they held a conference upon some subject which filled them with both grief and satisfaction. In this alternation of feeling did they pass the time until the sharp gnawing of hunger was relieved by sleep. A keen December wind blew with a bitter blast on the following morning; the rain was borne along upon it with violence, and the cold was chill and piercing. Owen, his wife, and their six children, issued at

day-break out of the barn in which, ever since their removal from Tubber Derg, they had lived until then; their miserable fragments of bed-clothes were tied in a bundle to keep them dry; their pace was slow, need we say sorrowful; all were in tears. Owen and Kathleen went first, with a child upon the back, and another in the hand, of each. Their route lay by their former dwelling, the door of which was open, for it had not been inhabited. On passing it they stood a moment; then with a simultaneous impulse both approached—entered—and took one last look of a spot to which their hearts clung with enduring attachment. They then returned; and as they passed, Owen put forth his hand, picked a few small pebbles out of the wall, and put them in his pocket.

"Farewell!" said he, "and may the blessin' of God rest upon you! We now lave you for ever! We're goin' at last to beg our bread through the world wide, where none will know of the happy days we passed widin your walls! We *must* lave you; but glory be to the Almighty, we are goin' wid a clear conscience; we took no revenge into our own hands, but left everything to God above us. We are poor, but there is neither blood, nor murder, nor dishonesty upon our heads. Don't cry, Kathleen—don't cry, childher; there is still a good God above, who can and may do something for us *yet,* glory be to his holy name!"

He then passed on with his family, which, including himself, made, in all, eight paupers, be-

ing an additional burden upon the country, which might easily have been avoided. His land was about two years waste, and when it was ultimately taken, the house was a ruin, and the money allowed by the landlord for building a new one, together with the loss of two years' rent, would, if humanely directed, have enabled Owen M'Carthy to remain a solvent tenant.

When an Irish peasant is reduced to pauperism, he seldom commences the melancholy task of soliciting alms in his native place. The trial is always a severe one, and he is anxious to hide his shame and misery from the eyes of those who know him. This is one reason why some system of poor laws should be introduced into the country. Paupers of this description become a burden upon strangers, whilst those who are capable of entering with friendly sympathy into their misfortunes have no opportunity of assisting them. Indeed this shame of seeking alms from those who have known the mendicant in better days, is a proof that the absence of poor laws takes away from the poorer classes one of the strongest incitements to industry; for instance, if every pauper in Ireland were confined to his own parish, and compelled to beg from his acquaintances, the sense of shame alone would, by stirring them up to greater industry, reduce the number of mendicants onehalf. There is a strong spirit of family pride in Ireland, which would be sufficient to make many poor, of both sexes, exert themselves to the uttermost rather than cast a stain upon their name, or bring a blush to the

face of their relations. But now it is not so; the mendicant sets out to beg, and in most instances commences his new mode of life in some distant part of the country, where his name and family are not known.

Indeed it is astonishing how any man can, for a moment, hesitate to form his opinion upon the subject of poor laws. The English and Scotch gentry know something about the middle and lower classes of their respective countries, and of course they have a fixed system of provision for the poor in each. The ignorance of the Irish gentry, upon almost every subject connected with the real good of the people, is only in keeping with their ignorance of the people themselves. It is to be feared, however, that their disinclination to introduce poor laws arises less from actual ignorance, than from an illiberal selfishness. The facts of the case are these:—In Ireland the whole support of the inconceivable multitude of paupers, who swarm like locusts over the surface of the country, rests upon the middle and lower classes, or rather upon the latter, for there is scarcely such a thing in this unhappy country as a middle class. In not one out of a thousand instances do the gentry contribute to the mendicant poor. In the first place, a vast proportion of our landlords are absentees, who squander upon their own pleasures or vices, in the theatres, saloons, or gaming-houses of France, or in the softer profligacies of Italy, that which ought to return in some shape to stand in the place of duties so shamefully neg-

lected. These persons contribute nothing to the poor, except the various evils which their absence entails upon them.

On the other hand, the *resident* gentry never, in any case, assist a beggar, even in the remote parts of the country, where there are no Mendicity Institutions. Nor do the beggars ever think of applying to them. They know that his Honor's dogs would be slipped at them; or that the whip might be laid, perhaps, to the shoulders of a broken-hearted father, with his brood of helpless children wanting food; perhaps, upon the emaciated person of a miserable widow, who begs for her orphans, only because the hands that supported, and would have defended both her and them, are mouldered into dust.

Upon the middle and lower classes, therefore, comes *directly* the heavy burden of supporting the great mass of pauperism that presses upon Ireland. It is certain that the Irish landlords know this, and that they are reluctant to see any law enacted which might make the performance of their duties to the poor compulsory. This, indeed, is natural in men who have so inhumanly neglected them.

But what must the state of a country be where those who are on the way to pauperism themselves are exclusively burdened with the support of the vagrant poor? It is like putting additional weight on a man already sinking under the burden he bears. The landlords suppose, that because the maintenance of the idle who are able, and of the aged and infirm who are not able to

work, comes upon the renters of land, they themselves are exempted from their support. This, if true, is as bitter a stigma upon their humanity as upon their sense of justice: but it is *not* true. Though the cost of supporting such an incredible number of the idle and helpless does, in the first place, fall upon the tenant, yet, by diminishing his means, and by often compelling him to purchase, towards the end of the season, a portion of food equal to that which he has given away in charity, it certainly becomes ultimately a clear deduction from the landlord's rent. In either case it is a deduction, but in the latter it is often doubly so; inasmuch as the poor tenants must frequently pay, at the close of a season, double, perhaps treble, the price which provision brought at the beginning of it.

Any person conversant with the Irish people must frequently have heard such dialogues as the following, during the application of a beggar for alms:—

Mendicant.—"We're axin' your charity, for God's sake!"

Poor Tenant.—"Why thin for His sake you would get it, poor crathur, if we had it; but it's not for you widin the four corners of the house. It 'ud be well for us if we had *now* all we gave away in charity *durin' the whole year;* we wouldn't have to be buyin' for ourselves at three prices. Why don't you go up to the Big House? *They're* rich and can afford it."

Mendicant, with a shrug, which sets all his coats and bags in motion—"Och! och! The Big

House, inagh! Musha, do you want me, an' the childhre here, to be torn to pieces wid the dogs? or lashed wid a whip by one o' the sarvints? No, no, avourneen!" (with a hopeless shake of the head.) "That 'ud be a blue look-up, like a clear evenin'."

Poor Tenant.—"Then, indeed, we haven't it to help you, now, poor man. We're buyin' ourselves."

Mendicant.—"Thin, throth, that's lucky, so it is! I've as purty a grain o' male here, as you'd wish to thicken wather wid, that I sthruv to get together, in hopes to be able to buy a quarther o' tobaccy, along wid a pair o' new bades an' a scapular for myself. I'm suspicious that there's about a stone ov it altogether. You can have it anunder the market price, for I'm frettin' at not havin' the scapular an me. Sure the Lord will sind me an' the childhre a bit an' sup some way else—glory to his name!—besides a lock o' praties in the corner o' the bag here, that'll do us for this day, any way."

The bargain is immediately struck, and the poor tenant is glad to purchase, even from a beggar, his stone of meal, in consequence of getting it a few pence under market price. Such scenes as this, which are of frequent occurrence in the country parts of Ireland, need no comment.

This, certainly, is not a state of things which should be permitted to exist. Every man ought to be compelled to support the poor of his native parish according to his means. It is an indelible

disgrace to the legislature so long to have neglected the paupers of Ireland. Is it to be thought of with common patience that a person rolling in wealth shall feed upon his turtle, his venison, and his costly luxuries of every description, for which he will not scruple to pay the highest price—that this heartless and selfish man, whether he reside at home or abroad, shall thus unconscionably pamper himself with viands purchased by the toil of the people, and yet not contribute to assist them, when poverty, sickness, or age, throws them upon the scanty support of casual charity!

Shall this man be permitted to batten in luxury in a foreign land, or, at home; to whip our paupers from his carriage; or hunt them, like beasts of prey, from his grounds, whilst the lower classes—the gradually decaying poor—are compelled to groan under the burden of their support in addition to their other burdens? Surely it is not a question which admits of argument. This subject has been darkened and made difficult by fine-spun and unintelligible theories, when the only knowledge necessary to understand it may be gained by spending a few weeks in some poor village in the interior of the country. As for Parliamentary Committees upon this or any other subject, they are, with reverence be it spoken, thoroughly contemptible. They will summon and examine witnesses who, for the most part, know little about the habits or distresses of the poor; public money will be wasted in defraying their expenses and in print-

ing reports; resolutions will be passed; something will be said about it in the House of Commons; and, in a few weeks, after resolving and re-resolving, it is as little thought of, as if it had never been the subject of investigation. In the mean time the evil proceeds—becomes more inveterate—eats into the already declining prosperity of the country—whilst those who suffer under it have the consolation of knowing that a Parliamentary Committee sat longer upon it than so many geese upon their eggs, but hatched nothing. Two circumstances, connected with pauperism in Ireland, are worthy of notice. The first is this—the Roman Catholics, who certainly constitute the bulk of the population, feel themselves called upon, from the peculiar tenets of their religion, to exercise indiscriminate charity largely to the begging poor. They act under the impression that eleemosynary good works possess the power of cancelling sin to an extent almost incredible. Many of their religious legends are founded upon this view of the case; and the reader will find an appropriate one in the Priest's sermon, as given in our tale of the "Poor Scholar." That legend is one which the author has many a time heard from the lips of the people, by whom it was implicitly believed. A man who may have committed a murder overnight, will the next day endeavour to wipe away his guilt by alms given for the purpose of getting the benefit of "the poor man's prayer." The principle of assisting our distressed fellow-creatures, when rationally exercised, is one of the

best in society; but here it becomes entangled with error, superstition, and even with crime—acts as a bounty upon imposture, and in some degree predisposes to guilt, from an erroneous belief that sin may be cancelled by alms and the prayers of mendicant impostors.

The second point, in connexion with pauperism, is the immoral influence that proceeds from the relation in which the begging poor in Ireland stand towards the class by whom they are supported. These, as we have already said, are the poorest, least educated, and consequently the most ignorant description of the people. They are, also, the most numerous. There have been for centuries, probably since the Reformation itself, certain opinions floating among the lower classes in Ireland, all tending to prepare them for some great change in their favour, arising from the discomfiture of heresy, the overthrow of their enemies, and the exaltation of themselves and their religion.

Scarcely had the public mind subsided after the Rebellion of Ninety-eight, when the success of Buonaparte directed the eyes and the hopes of the Irish people towards *him,* as the person designed to be their deliverer. Many a fine fiction has the author of this work heard about that great man's escapes, concerning the bullets that conveniently turned aside from his person, and the sabres that civilly declined to cut him down. Many prophecies too were related, in which the glory of this country under his reign was touched off in the happiest colours. Pastorini also gave

such notions an impulse. Eighteen twenty-five was to be the year of their deliverance: George the Fourth was never to fill the British throne; and the mill of Lowth was to be turned three times with human blood. "The miller with the two thumbs was then living," said the mendicants, for they were the principal propagators of these opinions, and the great expounders of their own prophecies; so that of course there could be no further doubt upon the subject. Several of them had seen him, a red-haired man with broad shoulders, stout legs, exactly such as a miller ought to have, and two thumbs on his right hand; all precisely as the prophecy had stated. Then there was *Beal-derg*, and several others of the fierce old Milesian chiefs, who along with their armies lay in an enchanted sleep, all ready to awake and take a part in the delivery of the country. "Sure such a man," and they would name one in the time of the mendicant's grandfather, "was once going to a fair to sell a horse —well and good; the time was the dawn of morning, a little before day-light: he met a man who undertook to purchase his horse; they agreed upon the price, and the seller of him followed the buyer into a Rath, where he found a range of horses, each with an armed soldier asleep by his side, ready to spring upon him if awoke. The purchaser cautioned the owner of the horse as they were about to enter the subterraneous dwelling, against touching either horse or man; but the countryman happening to stumble, inadvertently laid his hand upon a sleeping soldier, who

immediately leaped up, drew his sword, and asked, '*Wuil anam inh?*' 'Is the time in it? Is the time arrived?' To which the horse-dealer of the Rath replied, '*Ha niel. Gho dhee collhow areesht.*' 'No: go to sleep again.' Upon this the soldier immediately sank down in his former position, and unbroken sleep reigned throughout the cave." The influence on the warm imaginations of an ignorant people, of such fictions concocted by vagrant mendicants, is very pernicious. They fill their minds with the most palpable absurdities, and, what is worse, with opinions, which, besides being injurious to those who receive them, in every instance insure for those who propagate them a cordial and kind reception.

These mendicants consequently pander, for their own selfish ends, to the prejudices of the ignorant, which they nourish and draw out in a manner that has in no slight degree been subversive of the peace of the country. Scarcely any political circumstance occurs which they do not immediately seize upon and twist to their own purposes, or in other words, to the opinions of those from whom they derive their support. When our present police first appeared in their uniforms and black belts, another prophecy, forsooth, was fulfilled. Immediately before the downfall of heresy, a body of "Black Militia" was to appear; the police, then, are the black militia, and the people consider themselves another step nearer the consummation of their vague speculations.

In the year Ninety-eight, the Irish mendicants

were active agents, clever spies, and expert messengers on the part of the people; and to this day they carry falsehood, and the materials of outrage in its worst shape, into the bosom of peaceable families, who would, otherwise, never become connected with a system which is calculated to bring ruin and destruction upon those who permit themselves to join it.

This evil, and it is no trifling one, would, by the introduction of poor-laws, be utterly abolished; the people would not only be more easily improved, but education, when received, would not be corrupted by the infusion into it of such ingredients as the above. In many other points of view, the confirmed and hackneyed mendicants of Ireland are a great evil to the morals of the people. We could easily detail them, but such not being our object at present, we will now dismiss the subject of poor-laws, and resume our narrative.

Far—far different from this description of impostors, were Owen M'Carthy and his family. Their misfortunes were not the consequences of negligence or misconduct on their own part. They struggled long but unavailingly against high rents and low markets; against neglect on the part of the landlord and his agent; against sickness, famine, and death. They had no alternative but to beg or starve. Owen was willing to work, but he could not procure employment: and provided he could, the miserable sum of sixpence a day, when food was scarce and dear, would not support him, his wife, and six little

ones. He became a pauper therefore, only to avoid starvation.

Heavy and black was his heart, to use the strong expression of the people, on the bitter morning when he set out to encounter the dismal task of seeking alms, in order to keep life in himself and his family. The plan was devised on the preceding night, but to no mortal, except his wife, was it communicated. The honest pride of a man whose mind was above committing a mean action, would not permit him to reveal what he considered the first stain that ever was known to rest upon the name of M'Carthy; he therefore sallied out under the beating of the storm, and proceeded, without caring much whither he went, until he got considerably beyond the bounds of his own parish.

In the meantime hunger pressed keenly upon him and them. The day had no appearance of clearing up; the heavy rain and sleet beat into their thin, worn garments, and the clamour of his children for food began to grow more and more importunate. They came to the shelter of a hedge, which inclosed on one side a remote and broken road, along which, in order to avoid the risk of being recognised, they had preferred travelling. Owen stood here for a few minutes to consult with his wife, as to where and when they should "make a beginning;" but on looking round, he found her in tears.

"Kathleen, asthore," said he, "I can't bid you not to cry; bear up, acushla machree; bear up: sure, as I said when we came out this mornin',

there's a good God above us, that can still turn over the good lafe for us, if we put our hopes in him."

"Owen," said his sinking wife, "it's not altogether bekase we're brought to this that I'm cryin'; no, indeed."

"Thin what ails you, Kathleen darlin'?"

The wife hesitated, and evaded the question for some time; but at length, upon his pressing her for an answer, with a fresh gush of sorrow, she replied,

"Owen, since you *must* know—och, may God pity us!—since you must know, it's wid hunger—*wid hunger!* I kept, unknownst, a little bit of bread to give the childhre this mornin', and that was part of it I gave you yesterday early—I'm near two days fastin'."

"Kathleen! Kathleen! Och! sure I know your worth, avillish. You were too good a wife, an' too good a mother, a'most! God forgive me, Kathleen! I fretted about beginnin', dear; but as my Heavenly Father's above me, I'm now happier to beg wid you by my side, nor if I war in the best house in the province widout you! Hould up, avourneen, for a while. Come on, childhre, darlins, an' the first house we meet we'll ax their char——, their assistance. Come on, darlins, and all of yees. Why my heart's asier, so it is. Sure we have your mother, childhre, safe wid us, an' what signifies anything so long as *she's* left to us?"

He then raised his wife tenderly, for she had been compelled to sit from weakness, and they

bent their steps to a decent farm-house that stood a few perches off the road, about a quarter of a mile before them.

As they approached the door, the husband hesitated a moment; his face got paler than usual, and his lip quivered, as he said—"Kathleen—"

"I know what you're goin' to say, Owen. No, acushla, *you* won't; *I'll* ax it myself."

"Do," said Owen, with difficulty; "I can't do it; but I'll overcome my pride afore long, I hope. It's thryin' to me, Kathleen, an' you know it is—for you know how little I ever expected to be brought to this."

"Husht, avillish! We'll thry, then, in the name o' God."

As she spoke, the children, herself, and her husband entered, to beg, for the first time in their lives, a morsel of food. Yes! timidly—with a blush of shame, red even to crimson, upon the pallid features of Kathleen—with grief acute and piercing—they entered the house together.

For some minutes they stood and spoke not. The unhappy woman, unaccustomed to the language of supplication, scarcely knew in what terms to crave assistance. Owen himself stood back, uncovered, his fine, but much changed features, overcast with an expression of deep affliction. Kathleen cast a single glance at him, as if for encouragement. Their eyes met; she saw the upright man—the last remnant of the M'Carthy—himself once the friend of the poor, of the unhappy, of the afflicted—standing

crushed and broken down by misfortunes which he had not deserved, waiting with patience for a morsel of charity. Owen, too, had *his* remembrances. He recollected the days when he sought and gained the pure and fond affections of his Kathleen: when beauty, and youth, and innocence encircled her with their light and their grace, as she spoke or moved; he saw her a happy wife and mother in her own home, kind and benevolent to all who required her good word or her good office, and remembered the sweetness of her light-hearted song; but now she was homeless. He remembered, too, how she used to plead with himself for the afflicted. It was but a moment; yet when their eyes met, that moment was crowded by recollections that flashed across their minds with a keen sense of a lot so bitter and wretched as theirs. Kathleen could not speak, although she tried; her sobs denied her utterance; and Owen involuntarily sat upon a chair, and covered his face with his hand.

To an observing eye it is never difficult to detect the cant of imposture, or to perceive distress when it is real. The good woman of the house, as is usual in Ireland, was in the act of approaching them, unsolicited, with a double handful of meal—that is what the Scotch and northern Irish call a *gowpen,* or as much as both hands locked together can contain—when, noticing their distress, she paused a moment, eyed them more closely, and exclaimed—

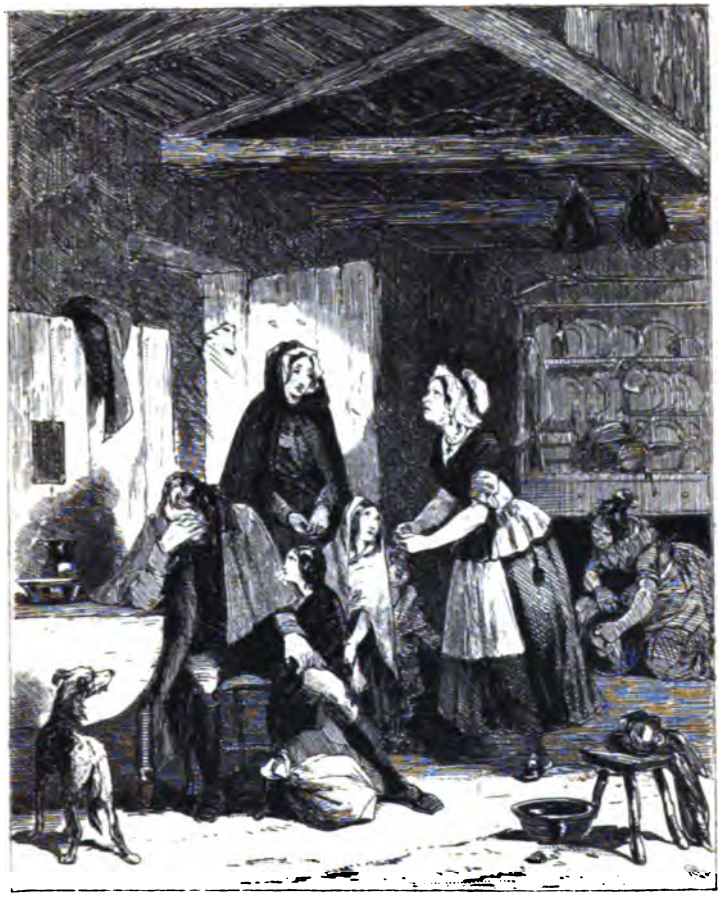
"What's this? Why there's something wrong

The First Alms Begging
Etching from an Original Drawing by Phis

was

the

The First Alms Begging
Etching from an Original Drawing by Phiz



The First Alms Begging
Etching from an Original Drawing by Phiz

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wid you, good people! But first an' foremost take this, in the name an' honour of God."

"May the blessin' of the same Man[68] rest upon yees!" replied Kathleen. "This is a sorrowful thrial to us; for it's our first day to be upon the world; an' this is the first help of the kind we ever axed for, or ever got; an' indeed now I find we haven't even a place to carry it in. I've no—b—b—cloth, or anything to hould it."

"Your first, is it?" said the good woman. "Your first! May the marciful queen o' heaven look down upon yees, but it's a bitther day yees war driven out in! Sit down, there, you poor crathur. God pity you, I pray this day, for you *have* a heart-broken look! Sit down awhile, near the fire, you an' the childre! Come over, darlins, an' warm yourselves. Och, oh! but it's a thousand pities to see sich fine childre—handsome an' good lookin' even as they are, brought to this! Come over, good man; get near the fire, for you're wet an' could all of ye. Brian, *ludher* them two lazy thieves o' dogs out o' that. *Eiree suas, a wadhee bradagh, agus go mah a shin!*—be off wid yez, ye lazy divils, that's not worth your feedin'! Come over, honest man."

Owen and his family were placed near the fire; the poor man's heart was full, and he sighed heavily.

"May He that is plased to thry us," he exclaimed, "reward you for this! We are," he continued, "a poor an' a sufferin' family; but it's the will of God that we should be so, an' sure we

can't complain widout committin' sin. All we ax now, is, that it may be plasin' to him that brought us low, to enable us to bear up undher our thrials. We would take it to our choice to beg an' be honest, sooner nor to be wealthy, an' wicked! We have our failings, an' our sins, God help us; but still there's nothin' dark or heavy on our consciences. Glory be to the name o' God for it!"

"Throth, I believe you," replied the farmer's wife; "there's thruth an' honesty in your face; one may easily see the remains of dacency about you all. Musha, throw your little things aside, an' stay where ye are to-day: you can't bring out the childre under the teem of rain an' sleet that's in it. *Wurrah dheelish,* but it's the bitther day all out. Faix, Paddy will get a dhrookin, so he will, at that weary fair wid the stirks, poor bouchal—a son of ours that's gone to Ballyboulteen to sell some cattle, an' he'll not be worth three hapuns afore he comes back. I hope he'll have since to go into some house, when he's done, an' dhry himself well, any how, besides takin' somethin' to keep out the could. Put by your things, an' don't think of goin' out sich a day."

"We thank you," replied Owen. "Indeed we're glad to stay undher your roof; for, poor things, they're badly able to thravel sich a day—these childhre."

"Musha, ye ate no breakfast, maybe?"

Owen and his family were silent. The children looked wistfully at their parents, anxious

that they should confirm what the good woman surmised; the father looked again at his famished brood and his sinking wife, and nature overcame him.

"Food did not crass our lips this day," replied Owen; "an' I may say hardly anything yesterday."

"Oh, blessed mother! Here, Katty Murray, drop scrubbin' that dresser, an' put down the midlin' pot for stirabout. Be livin'! *manim an diouol,* woman alive, handle yourself; you might a had it boilin' by this. God presarve us!—to be two days widout atin! Be the crass, Katty, if you're not alive, I'll give you a douse o' the churnstaff that'll bring the fire to your eyes! Do you hear me?"

"I do hear you, an' did often feel you, too, for fraid hearin' wouldn't do. You think there's no places in the world but your own, I b'lieve. Faix, indeed! it's well come up wid us, to be randied about wid no less a switch than a churnstaff!"

"Is it givin' back talk, you are? Bad end to me, if you look crucked but I'll lave you a mark to remimber me by. What woman 'ud put up wid you but myself, you shkamin flipe? It wasn't to give me your bad tongue I hired you, but to do your business; an' be the crass above us, if you turn your tongue on me agin, I'll give you the weight o' the churnstaff. Is it bekase they're poor people that it plased God to bring to this, that you turn up your nose at doin' anything to sarve them? There's not wather enough

there, I say—put in more. What signifies all the stirabout that 'ud make? Put plinty in: it's betther always to have too much than too little. Faix, I tell you, you'll want a male's meat an' a night's lodgin' afore you die, if you don't mend your manners."

"Och, musha, the poor girl is doin' her best," observed Kathleen; "an' I'm sure she wouldn't be guilty of usin' pride to the likes of us, or to any one that the Lord has laid his hand upon."

"She had betther not, while I'm to the fore," said her mistress. "What is she herself? Sure if it was a sin to be poor, God help the world. No; it's neither a sin nor a shame."

"Thanks be to God, no," said Owen; "it's neither the one nor the other. So long as we keep a fair name, an' a clear conscience, we can't ever say that our case is hard."

After some further conversation a comfortable breakfast was prepared for them, of which they partook with an appetite sharpened by their long abstinence from food. Their stay here was particularly fortunate, for as they were certain of a cordial welcome, and an abundance of that which they much wanted—wholesome food—the pressure of immediate distress was removed. They had time to think more accurately upon the little preparations for misery which were necessary, and, as the day's leisure was at their disposal, Kathleen's needle and scissors were industriously plied in mending the tattered clothes of her husband and her children, in order to meet the inclemency of the weather.

On the following morning, after another abundant breakfast, and substantial marks of kindness from their entertainers, they prepared to resume their new and melancholy mode of life. As they were about to depart, the farmer's wife addressed them in the following terms—the farmer himself, by the way, being but the shadow of his worthy partner in life—

Wife—"Now, good people, you're takin' the world on your heads——"

Farmer—"Ay, good people, you're takin' the world on your heads——"

Wife—"Hould your tongue, Brian, an' suck your dhudeen. It's me that's spakin' to them, so none of your palaver, if you plase, till I'm done, an' then you may prache till Tib's Eve, an' that's neither before Christmas nor afther it."

Farmer—"Sure I'm sayin' nothin', Elveen, barrin' houldin' my tongue, *a shuchar*." [69]

Wife—"You're takin' the world on yez, an' God knows 'tis a heavy load to carry, poor crathurs."

Farmer—"A heavy load, poor crathurs! God he knows it's that."

Wife—"Brian! *Gluntho ma?*—did you hear me? You'll be puttin' in your gab, an' me spakin'? How-an-iver, as I was sayin', our house was the first ye came to, an' they say there's a great blessin' to thim that gives the *first* charity to a poor man or woman settin' out to look for their bit."

Farmer—"Throgs, ay! Whin they set out to look for their bit."

Wife—"By the crass, Brian, you'd vex a saint. What have you to say in it, you *pittiogue?*[70] Hould your whist now, an' suck your dhudeen, I say; sure I allow you a quarther o' tobaccy a week, an' what right have you to be puttin' in your gosther when other people's spakin'?"

Farmer—"Go an."

Wife—"So, you see, the long an' the short of it is, that whenever you happen to be in this side of the counthry, always come to *us*. You know the ould sayin'—when the poor man comes he brings a blessin', an' when he goes he carries away a curse. You have as much meal as will last yez a day or two; an' God he sees you're heartily welcome to all ye got?"

Farmer—"God he sees you're heartily welcome——"

Wife—"*Chorp an diouol,* Brian, hould your tongue, or I'll turn you out o' the kitchen. One can't hear their own ears for you, you poor squakin' dhrone. By the crass, I'll—eh? Will you whisht, now?"

Farmer—"Go an. Amn't I dhrawin' my pipe?"

Wife—"Well dhraw *it;* but don't dhraw *me* down upon you, barrin——. Do you hear me? an' the sthrange people to the fore, too! Well, the Lord be wid yez, an' bless yez! But afore yez go, jist lave your blessin' wid us: for it's a good thing to have the blessin' of the poor."

"The Lord bless you, an' yours!" said Owen, fervently. "May you an' them never—oh, may

you never—*never* suffer what we've suffered; nor know what it is to want a male's mate, or a night's lodgin'!"

"Amin!" exclaimed Kathleen; "may the world flow upon you! for your good kind heart desarves it."

Farmer—"An' whisper; I wish you'd offer up a prayer for the rulin' o' the tongue. The Lord might hear *you,* but there's no great hopes that ever he'll hear *me;* though I've prayed for it amost ever since I was married, night an' day, winther an' summer; but no use, she's as bad as ever."

This was said in a kind of friendly insinuating undertone to Owen; who, on hearing it, simply nodded his head, but made no other reply.

They then recommenced their journey, after having once more blessed, and been invited by, their charitable entertainers, who made them promise never to pass their house without stopping a night with them.

It is not our intention to trace Owen M'Carthy and his wife through all the variety which a wandering pauper's life affords. He never could reconcile himself to the habits of a mendicant. His honest pride and integrity of heart raised him above it; neither did he sink into the whine and cant of imposture, nor the slang of knavery. No; there was a touch of manly sorrow about him, which neither time, nor familiarity with his degraded mode of life, could take away from him. His usual observation to his wife, and he never made it without a pang of intense bitter-

ness, was—" Kathleen, darlin', it's thrue we have enough to ate an' to dhrink; but *we have no home —no home!*" To a man like him it was a thought of surpassing bitterness, indeed.

"Ah! Kathleen," he would observe, "if we had but the poorest shed that could be built, provided it was *our own,* wouldn't we be happy? The bread we ate, avourneen, doesn't do us good. We don't work for it; it's the bread of shame and idleness: and yet it's Owen M'Carthy that ates it! But, avourneen, that's past; an' we'll never see our own home, or our own hearth agin. That's what's cuttin' into my heart, Kathleen. Never!—never!"

Many a trial, too, of another kind, was his patience called upon to sustain; particularly from the wealthy and the more elevated in life, when his inexperience as a mendicant led him to solicit their assistance.

"Begone, sirrah, off my grounds!" one would say. "Why don't you work, you sturdy impostor," another would exclaim, "rather than stroll about so lazily, training your brats to the gallows?" "You should be taken up, fellow, as a vagrant," a third would observe; "and if I ever catch you coming up my avenue again, depend upon it, I will slip my dogs at you and your idle spawn."

Owen, on these occasions, turned away in silence; he did not curse them; but the pangs of his honest heart went before Him who will, sooner or later, visit upon the heads of such men their cruel spurning and neglect of the poor.

"Kathleen," he observed to his wife, one day, about a year or more after they had begun to beg; "Kathleen, I have been turnin' it in my mind, that some of these childhre might sthrive to earn their bit an' sup, an' their little coverin' of clo'es, poor things. We might put them to herd cows in the summer, an' the *girshas* to somethin' else in the farmers' houses. What do you think, asthore?"

"For God's sake do, Owen; sure my heart's crushed to see them—my own childhre, that I could lay down my life for—beggin' from door to door. Och, do something for them that way, Owen, an' you'll relieve the heart that loves them. It's a sore sight to a mother's eye, Owen, to see her childhre beggin' their morsel."

"It is darlin'—it is; we'll hire out the three eldest,—Brian, an' Owen, an' Pether, to herd cows; an' we may get Peggy into some farmer's house to do loose jobs an' run of messages. Then we'd have only little Kathleen an' poor Ned along wid us. I'll thry any way, an' if I can get them places, who knows what may happen? I have a plan in my head that I'll tell you, thin."

"Arrah, what is it, Owen, jewel? Sure if I know it, maybe when I'm sorrowful, that thinkin' of it, an' lookin' forrid to it will make me happier. An' I'm sure, acushla, you would like that."

"But, maybe, Kathleen, if it wouldn't come to pass, that the disappointment 'ud be heavy on you?"

"How could it, Owen? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, whatever happens?"

"Thrue enough, indeed, I forgot that; an' yet we might, Kathleen. Sure we'd be worse, if we or the childhre had bad health."

"God forgive me thin, for what I said! We might be worse. Well, but what is the plan, Owen?"

"Why, when we get the childhre places, I'll sthrive to take a little house, an' work as a cottar. Then, Kathleen, '*we'd have a home of our own.*' I'd work from light to light; I'd work before hours an' afther hours; ay, nine days in the week, or we'd be comfortable in our own little home. We might be poor, Kathleen, I know that, an' hard pressed, too; but then, as I said, we'd have our own home, an' our own hearth; our morsel, if it 'ud be homely, would be sweet, for it would be the fruits of our own labour."

"Now, Owen, do you think you could manage to get that?"

"Wait, acushla, till we get the childhre settled. Then I'll thry the other plan, for it's good to thry anything that could take us out of this disgraceful life."

This humble speculation was a source of great comfort to them. Many a time have they forgotten their sorrows in contemplating the simple picture of their happy little cottage. Kathleen, in particular, drew with all the vivid colouring of a tender mother, and an affectionate wife, the

various sources of comfort and contentment to be found even in a cabin, whose inmates are blessed with a love of independence, industry and mutual affection.

Owen, in pursuance of his intention, did not neglect, when the proper season arrived, to place out his eldest children among the farmers. The reader need not be told that there was that about him which gained respect. He had, therefore, little trouble in obtaining his wishes on this point, and to his great satisfaction, he saw three of them hired out to earn their own support.

It was now a matter of some difficulty for him to take a cabin and get employment. They had not a single article of furniture, and neither bed nor bedding, with the exception of blankets almost worn past use. He was resolved, however, to give up, at all risks, the life of a mendicant. For this purpose, he and the wife agreed to adopt a plan quite usual in Ireland, under circumstances somewhat different from his: this was, that Kathleen should continue to beg for their support, until the first half-year of their children's service should expire; and in the meantime, that he, if possible, should secure employment for himself. By this means, his earnings, and that of his children, might remain untouched, so that in half a year, he calculated upon being able to furnish a cabin, and proceed, as a cottier, to work for, and support his young children and his wife, who determined, on her part, not to be idle any more than her husband. As

the plan was a likely one, and as Owen was bent on earning his bread, rather than be a burthen to others, it is unnecessary to say that it succeeded. In less than a year he found himself once more in a home, and the force of what he felt on sitting for the first time since his pauperism, at his own hearth, may easily be conceived by the reader. For some years after this, Owen got on slowly enough; his wages as a daily labourer being so miserable, that it required him to exert every nerve to keep the house over their head. What, however, will not carefulness and a virtuous determination, joined to indefatigable industry, do?

After some time, backed as he was by his wife, and even by his youngest children, he found himself beginning to improve. In the mornings and the evenings he cultivated his garden and his rood of potato-ground. He also collected with a wheelbarrow, which he borrowed from an acquaintance, compost from the neighbouring road; scoured an old drain before his door; dug rich earth, and tossed it into the pool of rotten water beside the house, and in fact, adopted several other modes of collecting manure. By this means, he had, each spring, a large portion of rich stuff on which to plant his potatoes. His landlord permitted him to spread this for planting upon his land; and Owen, ere long, instead of a rood, was able to plant half an acre, and ultimately, an acre of potatoes. The produce of this, being more than sufficient for the consumption of his family, he sold the surplus, and

with the money gained by the sale was enabled to sow half an acre of oats, of which, when made into meal, he disposed of the greater share.

Industry is capital; for even when unaided by capital it creates it; whereas, idleness with capital, produces only poverty and ruin. Owen, after selling his meal and as much potatoes as he could spare, found himself able to purchase a cow. Here was the means of making more manure; he had his cow, and he had also straw enough for her provender during the winter. The cow by affording milk to his family, enabled them to live more cheaply; her butter they sold, and this, in addition to his surplus meal and potatoes every year, soon made him feel that he had a few guineas to spare. He now bethought him of another mode of helping himself forward in the world: after buying the best "slip" of a pig he could find, a sty was built for her, and ere long he saw a fine litter of young pigs within a snug shed. These he reared until they were about two months old, when he sold them, and found that he had considerably gained by the transaction. This department, however, was under the management of Kathleen, whose life was one of incessant activity and employment. Owen's children, during the period of his struggles and improvements, were, by his advice, multiplying *their* little capital as fast as himself. The two boys, who had now shot up into the stature of young men, were at work as labouring servants in the neighbourhood. The daughters were also engaged as servants with the adjoining farmers.

The boys bought each a pair of two-year old heifers, and the daughter one. These they sent to graze up in the mountains at a trifling charge, for the first year or two: when they became springers, they put them to rich infield grass for a few months, until they got a marketable appearance, after which their father brought them to the neighbouring fairs, where they usually sold to great advantage, in consequence of the small outlay required in rearing them.

In fact, the principle of industry ran through the family. There was none of them idle; none of them a burthen or a check upon the profits made by the labourer. On the contrary, "they laid their shoulders together," as the phrase is, and proved to the world, that when the proper disposition is followed up by suitable energy and perseverance, it must generally reward him who possesses it.

It is certainly true that Owen's situation in life *now* was essentially different from that which it had been during the latter years of his struggles *as a farmer*. It was much more favourable, and far better calculated to develop successful exertion. If there be a class of men deserving public sympathy, it is that of the small farmers of Ireland. Their circumstances are fraught with all that is calculated to depress and ruin them; rents far above their ability, increasing poverty, and bad markets. The land, which during the last war might have enabled the renter to pay three pounds per acre, and yet still maintain himself with tolerable comfort, could not

now pay more than one pound, or, at the most, one pound ten; and yet, such is the infatuation of landlords, that, in most instances, the terms of leases taken out then are rigorously exacted. Neither can the remission of yearly arrears be said to strike at the root of the evils under which they suffer. The fact of the disproportionate rent hanging over them is a disheartening circumstance, that paralyzes their exertion, and sinks their spirits. If a landlord remit the rent for one term, he deals more harshly with the tenant at the next; whatever surplus, if any, his former indulgence leaves in the tenant's hands, instead of being expended upon his property as capital, and being permitted to lay the foundation of hope and prosperity, is drawn from him, at next term, and the poor struggling tenant is thrown back into as much distress, embarrassment, and despondency as ever. There are, I believe, few tenants in Ireland of the class I allude to, who are not from one gale to three in arrear. Now, how can it be expected, that such men will labour with spirit and earnestness to raise crops which they may never reap? crops which the landlords may seize upon to secure as much of his rent as he can.

I have known a case in which the arrears were not only remitted, but the rent lowered to a reasonable standard, such as, considering the markets, could be paid. And what was the consequence? The tenant who was looked upon as a negligent man, from whom scarcely any rent could be got, took courage, worked his farm with

a spirit and success which he had not evinced before; and ere long was in a capacity to pay his gales to the very day; so that the judicious and humane landlord was finally a gainer by his own excellent economy. This was an experiment, and it succeeded beyond expectation.

Owen M'Carthy did not work with more zeal and ability as an humble cottier, than he did, when a farmer; but the tide was against him as a landholder, and instead of having advanced, he actually lost ground until he became a pauper. No doubt, the peculiarly unfavourable run of two hard seasons, darkened by sickness and famine, were formidable obstacles to him; but he must eventually have failed, even had they not occurred. They accelerated his downfall, but did not cause it.

The Irish people, though poor, are exceedingly anxious to be independent. Their highest ambition is to hold a farm. So strong is this principle in them, that they will, without a single penny of capital, or any visible means to rely on, without consideration or forethought, come forward and offer a rent which, if they reflected only for a moment, they must feel to be unreasonably high. This, indeed, is a great evil in Ireland. But what, in the meantime, must we think of those imprudent landlords, and their more imprudent agents, who let their land to such persons, without proper inquiry into their means, knowledge of agriculture, and general character as moral and industrious men? A farm of land is to be let; it is advertised through the parish; ap-

plication is to be made before such a day, to so and so. The day arrives, the agent or the land-steward looks over the proposals, and after singling out the highest bidder, declares him tenant, as a matter of course. Now, perhaps, this said tenant does not possess a shilling in the world, nor a shilling's worth. Most likely he is a new-married man, with nothing but his wife's bed and bedding, his wedding-suit, and his black-thorn cudgel, which we may suppose him to keep in reserve for the bailiff. However, he commences his farm; and then follow the shiftings, the scramblings, and the fruitless struggles to succeed, where success is impossible. His farm is not half-tilled; his crops are miserable; the gale-day has already passed; yet, he can pay nothing until he takes it out of the land. Perhaps, he runs away—makes a moonlight flitting—and, by the aid of his friends, succeeds in bringing the crop with him. The landlord, or agent, declares he is a knave; forgetting that the man had no other alternative, and that they were the greater knaves and fools too, for encouraging him to undertake a task that was beyond his strength.

In calamity, we are anxious to derive support from the sympathy of our friends; in our success, we are eager to communicate to them the power of participating in our happiness. When Owen once more found himself independent and safe, he longed to realise two plans on which he had for some time before been seriously thinking. The first was to visit his former neigh-

bours, that they might at length know that Owen M'Carthy's station in the world was such as became his character. The second was, if possible, to take a farm in his native parish, that he might close his days among the companions of his youth, and the friends of his maturer years. He had, also, another motive; there lay the burying-place of the M'Carthys, in which slept the mouldering dust of his own "golden-haired" Alley. With them—in his daughter's grave—he intended to sleep his long sleep. Affection for the dead is the memory of the heart. In no other grave-yard could he reconcile it to himself to be buried; to it had all his forefathers been gathered; and though calamity had separated him from the scenes where they had passed through existence, yet he was resolved that death should not deprive him of its last melancholy consolation;—that of reposing with all that remained of the "departed," who had loved him, and whom he had loved. He believed, that to neglect this, would be to abandon a sacred duty, and felt sorrow at the thought of being like an absent guest from the assembly of *his own* dead; for there is a principle of undying hope in the heart, that carries, with bold and beautiful imagery, the realities of life into the silent recesses of death itself.

Having formed the resolution of visiting his old friends at Tubber Derg, he communicated it to Kathleen and his family; his wife received the intelligence with undisguised delight.

"Owen," she replied, "indeed I'm glad you

mintioned it. Many a time the thoughts of our place, an' the people about it, comes over me. I know, Owen, it'll go to your heart to see it; but still, avourneen, you'd like, too, to see the ould faces an' the warm hearts of them that pitied us, an' helped us, as well as they could, whin we war broken down."

"I would, Kathleen; but I'm not goin' merely to see thim an' the place. I intind, if I can, to take a bit of land somewhere *near* Tubber Derg. I'm unasy in my mind, for 'fraid I'd not sleep in the grave-yard where all belongin' to me lie."

A chord of the mother's heart was touched; and in a moment the memory of their beloved child brought the tears to her eyes.

"Owen, avourneen, I have one requist to ax of you, an' I'm sure you won't refuse it to me: if I die afore you, let me be buried wid Alley. Who has a right to sleep so near her as her own mother?"

"The child's in my heart still," said Owen, suppressing his emotion; "thinkin' of the unfortunate mornin' I wint to Dublin, brings her back to me. I see her standin', wid her fair pale face —pale—oh, my God!—wid hunger an' sickness —her little clo'es, an' her goolden hair, tossed about by the dark blast—the tears in her eyes, an' the smile, that she once had, on her face—houldin' up her mouth, an' sayin' 'Kiss *me* agin, father;' as if she knew, somehow, that I'd never see her, nor her me, any more. An' whin I looked back, as I was turnin' the corner, there she stood, strainin' her eyes after her father, that

she was then takin' the last sight of until the judgment-day."

His voice here became broken, and he sat in silence for a few minutes.

"It's sthrange," he added, with more firmness, "how she's so often in my mind!"

"But, Owen dear," replied Kathleen, "sure it was the will of God that she should lave us. She's now a bright angel in heaven, an' I dunna if it's right—indeed, I doubt it's sinful for us to think so much about her. Who knows but her innocent spirit is makin' inthercession for us all, before the blessed Mother o' God! Who knows but it was her that got us the good fortune that flowed in upon us, an' that made our strugglin' an' our labourin' turn out so *lucky*."

The idea of being *lucky* or *unlucky* is, in Ireland, an enemy to industry. It is certainly better that the people should believe success in life to be, as it is, the result of virtuous exertion, than of contingent circumstances, over which they themselves have no control. Still there was something beautiful in the superstition of Kathleen's affections; something that touched the heart and its dearest associations.

"It's very true, Kathleen," replied her husband; "but God is ever ready to help them that keeps an honest heart, an' do everything in their power to live creditably. They may fail for a time, or he may thry them for awhile, but sooner or later good intintions and honest labour will be rewarded. Look at ourselves—blessed be his name!"

"But whin do you mane to go to Tubber Derg, Owen?"

"In the beginnin' of the next week. An' Kathleen, ahagur, if you remimber the bitther mornin' we came upon the world—but we'll not be spakin' of that now. I don't like to think of it. Some other time, maybe, when we're settled among our ould friends, I'll mintion it."

"Well, the Lord bliss your endayvours, any how! Och, Owen, do thry an' get us a snug farm somewhere near them. But you didn't answer me about Alley, Owen?"

"Why, you must have your wish, Kathleen, although I intended to keep that place for myself. Still we can sleep one on aich side of her; an' that may be asily done, for our buryin' ground is large: so set your mind at rest on that head. I hope God won't call us till we see our childhre settled dacently in the world. But sure, at all evints, let his blessed will be done!"

"Amin! amin! It's not right of any one to keep their hearts fixed too much upon the world; nor even, they say, upon one's own childhre."

"People may love their childhre as much as they plase, Kathleen, if they don't let their *grah* for them spoil the crathurs, by givin' them their own will, till they become headstrong an' overbearin'. Now, let my linen be as white as a bone before Monday, plase goodness; I hope, by that time, that Jack Dogherty will have my new clo'es made; for I intind to go as dacent as ever they seen me in my best days."

"An' so you will, too, avillish. Throth,

Owen, it's you that'll be the proud man, steppin' in to them in all your grandeur! Ha, ha, ha! The spirit o' the M'Carthys is in you still, Owen."

"Ha, ha, ha! It is, darlin'; it is, indeed; an' I'd be sarry it wasn't. I long to see poor Widow Murray. I dunna is her son, Jemmy, married. Who knows, afther all we suffered, but I might be able to help her yet?—that is, if she stands in need of it. But, I suppose, her childhre's grown up now, an' able to assist her. Now, Kathleen, mind Monday next; an' have everything ready. I'll stay away a week or so, at the most, an' afther that I'll have news for you about all o' them."

When Monday morning arrived, Owen found himself ready to set out for Tubber Derg. The tailor had not disappointed him; and Kathleen, to do her justice, took care that the proofs of her good housewifery should be apparent in the whiteness of his linen. After breakfast, he dressed himself in all his finery; and it would be difficult to say whether the harmless vanity that peeped out occasionally from his simplicity of character, or the open and undisguised triumph of his faithful wife, whose eye rested on him with pride and affection, was most calculated to produce a smile.

"Now, Kathleen," said he, when preparing for his immediate departure, "I'm thinkin' of what they'll say, when they see me so smooth an' warm-lookin'. I'll engage they'll be axin' one another, 'Musha, how did Owen M'Carthy get an, at all,

to be so well to do in the world, as he appears to be, afther failin' on his ould farm?' "

"Well, but Owen, you know how to manage them."

"Throth, I do that. But there is *one* thing they'll never get out o' me, any way."

"You won't tell *that* to any o' them, Owen?"

"Kathleen, if I thought they only suspected it, I'd never show my face in Tubber Derg agin. I think I could bear to be—an' yet it 'ud be a hard struggle wid me too—but I *think* I could bear to be buried among black strangers, rather than it should be said, over my grave, among my own, 'there's where Owen M'Carthy lies—who was the only man, of his name, that ever begged his morsel on the king's highway. There he lies, the descendant of the great M'Carthy Mores, an' yet he was a beggar.' I know, Kathleen achora, it's neither a sin nor a shame to ax one's bit from our fellow-creatures, whin fairly brought to it, widout any fault of our own; but still I feel something in me, that can't bear to think of it widout shame an' heaviness of heart."

"Well, it's one comfort, that nobody knows it but ourselves. The poor childhre, for their own sakes, won't ever breathe it; so that it's likely the sacret 'ill be berrid wid us."

"I hope so, acushla. Does this coat sit asy atween the shouldhers? I feel it catch me a little."

"The sorra nicer. There; it was only your waistcoat that was turned down in the collar.

Here—hould your arm. There now—it wanted to be pulled down a little at the cuffs. Owen, it's a beauty; an' I think I have good right to be proud of it, for it's every thread my own spinnin'."

"How do I look in it, Kathleen? Tell me thruth, now."

"Throth, you're twenty years younger; the never a day less."

"I think I needn't be ashamed to go afore my ould friends in it, any way. Now bring me my staff, from undher the bed above; an', in the name o' God, I'll set out."

"Which o' them, Owen? Is it the oak or the blackthorn?"

"The oak, acushla. Oh, no; not the blackthorn. It's it that I brought to Dublin wid me, the unlucky thief, an' that I had while we wor *a shaughran*. Divil a one o' me but 'ud blush in the face, if I brought it even in my hand afore them. The oak, ahagur; the oak. You'll get it atween the foot o' the bed an' the wall."

When Kathleen placed the staff in his hand, he took off his hat and blessed himself, then put it on, looked at his wife, and said—"Now darlin', in the name o' God, I'll go. Husht, avillish machree, don't be cryin'; sure I'll be back to you in a week."

"Och! I can't help it, Owen. Sure this is the second time you war ever away from me more than a day; an' I'm thinkin' of what happened both to you an' me, the *first* time you

wint. Owen, acushla, I feel that if anything happened you, I'd break my heart."

"Arrah, what 'ud happen me, darlin', wid God to protect me? Now, God be wid you Kathleen dheelish, till I come back to you wid good news, I hope. I'm not goin' in sickness an' misery, as I wint afore, to see a man that wouldn't hear my appale to him; an' I'm lavin' you comfortable, agrah, an' wantin' for nothin'. Sure it's only about five-an'-twenty miles from this—a mere step. The good God bless an' take care of you, my darlin' wife, till I come home to you!"

He kissed the tears that streamed from her eyes; and, hemming several times, pressed her hand, his face rather averted, then grasped his staff, and commenced his journey.

Scenes like this were important events to our humble couple. Life, when untainted by the crimes and artificial manners which destroy its purity, is a beautiful thing to contemplate among the virtuous poor; and, where the current of affection runs deep and smooth, the slightest incident will agitate it. So was it with Owen M'Carthy and his wife. Simplicity, truth, and affection, constituted their character. In them there was no complication of incongruous elements. The order of their virtues was not broken, nor the purity of their affections violated, by the anomalous blending together of opposing principles, such as are to be found in those who are involuntarily contaminated by the corruption of human society.

Owen had not gone far, when Kathleen called to him: "Owen, ahagur—stand, darlin'; but don't come back a step, for fraid o' bad luck."[71]

"Did I forget anything, Kathleen?" he inquired. "Let me see; no; sure I have my beads an' my tobaccy box, an' my two clane shirts an' hankerchers in the bundle. What is it, acushla?"

"I needn't be axin' you, for I know you wouldn't forget it; but for fraid you might—Owen, whin you're at Tubber Derg, go to little Alley's grave, an' look at it; an' bring me back word how it appears. You might get it cleaned up, if there's weeds or anything growin' upon it; an' Owen, would you bring me a bit o' the clay, tied up in your pocket. Whin you're there, spake to her; tell her it was the lovin' mother that bid you, an' say anything that you'd think might keep her asy, an' give her pleasure. Tell her we're not now as we wor whin she was wid us; that we don't feel hunger, nor cowld, nor want; an' that nothin' is a throuble to us, barrin' that we miss *her*—ay, even yet—a *suillish machree*[72] that she was—that we miss her fair face an' goolden hair from among us. Tell her this; an' tell her it was the lovin' mother that said it, an' that sint the message to her."

"I'll do it all, Kathleen; I'll do it all—all. An' now go in, darlin', an' don't be frettin'. Maybe we'll soon be near her, plase God, where we can see the place she sleeps in, often."

They then separated again; and Owen, considerably affected by the maternal tenderness of his wife, proceeded on his journey. He had not,

actually, even at the period of his leaving home, been able to determine on what particular friend he should first call. That his welcome would be hospitable, nay, enthusiastically so, he was certain. In the meantime he vigorously pursued his journey; and partook neither of refreshment nor rest, until he arrived, a little after dusk, at a turn of the well-known road, which, had it been day-light, would have opened to him a view of Tubber Derg. He looked towards the beeches, however, under which it stood; but to gain a sight of it was impossible. His road now lying a little to the right, he turned to the house of his sterling friend, Frank Farrell, who had given him and his family shelter and support, when he was driven, without remorse, from his own holding. In a short time he reached Frank's residence, and felt a glow of sincere satisfaction at finding the same air of comfort and warmth about it as formerly. Through the kitchen window he saw the strong light of the blazing fire, and heard, ere he presented himself, the loud hearty laugh of his friend's wife, precisely as light and animated as it had been fifteen years before.

Owen lifted the latch and entered, with that fluttering of the pulse which every man feels on meeting with a friend, after an interval of many years.

"Musha, good people, can ye tell me is Frank Farrell at home?"

"Why, thin, he's not jist widin now, but he'll be here in no time entirely," replied one of his

daughters. "Won't you sit down, honest man, an' we'll sind for him."

"I'm thankful to you," said Owen. "I'll sit, sure enough, till he comes in."

"Why thin!—eh! it must—it *can* be no other!" exclaimed Farrell's wife, bringing over a candle and looking Owen earnestly in the face; "sure I'd know that voice all the world over! Why, thin, marciful Father—Owen M'Carthy,—Owen M'Carthy, is it your four quarthers that's livin' an' well? Queen o' heaven, Owen M'Carthy darlin', you're welcome!" the word was here interrupted by a hearty kiss from the kind housewife;—"welcome a thousand an' a thousand times! *Vick ne hoiah!* Owen dear, an' are you livin' at all? An' Kathleen, Owen, an' the childre, an' all of yez—an' how are they?"

"Throth, we're livin' an' well, Bridget; never was betther, thanks be to God an' you, in our lives."

Owen was now surrounded by such of Farrell's children, as were old enough to remember him; every one of whom he shook hands with, and kissed.

"Why, thin, the Lord save my sowl, Bridget," said he, "are these the little bouchaleens an' colleens that were runnin' about my feet whin I was here afore? Well, to be sure! How they do shoot up! An' is this Atty?"

"No: but *this* is Atty, Owen; faix, Brian outgrew him; an' here's Mary, an' this is Bridget Oge."

"Well!—well! But, where did these two

young shoots come from? this boy an' the colleen here? They worn't to the fore, in *my* time, Bridget."

"This is Owen, called afther yourself,—an' this is Kathleen. I needn't tell you who she was called afther."

"*Gutsho, alanna? thurm pogue?*—come here, child, and kiss me," said Owen to his little namesake; "an' sure I can't forget the little woman here; *gutsho*, a colleen, and kiss me too."

Owen took her on his knee, and kissed her twice.

"Och, but, poor Kathleen," said he, "will be the proud woman of this, when she hears it; in throth she will be that."

"Arrah! what's comin' over me!" said Mrs. Farrell. "Brian, run up to Micky Lowrie's, for your father. An' see, Brian, don't say who's wantin' him, till we give him a start. Mary, come here, acushla," she added to her eldest daughter in a whisper—"take these two bottles, an' fly up to Peggy Finigan's for the full o' them o' whiskey. Now be back before you're there, or if you don't, that I mightn't, but you'll see what you'll get. Fly, aroon, an' don't let the grass grow undher your feet. An' Owen darlin'—but first sit over to the fire:—here get over to this side, it's the snuggest;—arrah, Owen—an' sure I dunna what to ax you first. You're all well? all to the fore?"

"All well, Bridget, an' thanks be to heaven, all to the fore."

"Glory be to God! Throth it warms my heart

to hear it. An' the childre's all up finely, boys an' girls?"

"Throth, they are, Bridget, as good lookin' a family o' childre as you'd wish to see. An' what is betther, they're as good as they're good-lookin'."

"Throth, they couldn't but be that, if they tuck at all afther their father an' mother. Bridget, aroon, rub the pan betther—an' lay the knife down, I'll cut the bacon myself, but go an' get a dozen o' the freshest eggs;—an' Kathleen, Owen, how does poor Kathleen look? Does she stand it as well as yourself?"

"As young as ever you seen her. God help her!—a thousand degrees betther nor whin you seen her last."

"An' well to do, Owen?—now tell the thruth? Och, musha, I forget who I'm spakin' to, or I wouldn't disremimber the ould sayin' that's abroad this many a year:—'who ever knew a M'Carthy of Tubber Derg to tell a lie, break his word, or refuse to help a friend in distress.' But, Owen, you're well to do in the world?"

"We're as well, Bridget, or may be betther, nor you ever knew us, except, indeed, afore the ould lase was run out wid us."

"God be praised agin! Musha, turn round a little, Owen, for 'fraid Frank 'ud get too clear a sight of your face at first. Arrah, do you think he'll know you? Och, to be sure he will; I needn't ax. Your voice would tell upon you, any day."

"Know me! Indeed Frank 'ud know my shadow. He'll know me wid half a look."

And Owen was right, for quickly did the eye of his old friend recognise him, despite of the little plot that was laid to try his penetration. To describe their interview would be to repeat the scene we have already attempted to depict between Owen and Mrs. Farrell. No sooner were the rites of hospitality performed, than the tide of conversation began to flow with greater freedom. Owen ascertained one important fact, which we will here mention, because it produces, in a great degree, the want of anything like an independent class of yeomanry in the country. On inquiring after his old acquaintances, he discovered that a great many of them, owing to high rents, had emigrated to America. They belonged to that class of independent farmers, who, after the expiration of their old leases, finding the little capital they had saved beginning to diminish, in consequence of rents which they could not pay, deemed it more prudent, while anything remained in their hands, to seek a country where capital and industry might be made available. Thus did the landlords, by their mismanagement and neglect, absolutely drive off their estates, the only men, who, if properly encouraged, were capable of becoming the strength and pride of the country. It is this system, joined to the curse of middlemen and sub-letting, which has left the country without any third grade of decent substantial yeomen, who might

stand as a bond of peace between the highest and the lowest classes. It is this which has split the kingdom into two divisions, constituting the extreme ends of society—the wealthy, and the wretched. If this third class existed, Ireland would neither be so political nor discontented as she is; but on the contrary, more remarkable for peace and industry. At present, the lower classes, being too poor, are easily excited by those who promise them a better order of things than that which exists. These theorists step into the exercise of that legitimate influence which the landed proprietors have lost by their neglect. There is no middle class in the country, who can turn round to them and say, "Our circumstances are easy, we want nothing; carry your promises to the poor, for that which you hold forth to *their* hopes, *we* enjoy in reality." The poor soldier, who, because he was wretched, volunteered to go on the forlorn hope, made a fortune; but when asked if he would go on a second enterprise of a similar kind, shrewdly replied; "General, I am *now* an independent man; send some *poor* devil on your forlorn hope who wants to make a fortune."

Owen now heard anecdotes and narratives of all occurrences, whether interesting or strange, that had taken place during his absence. Among others, was the death of his former landlord, and the removal of the agent who had driven him to beggary. Tubber Derg, he found, was then the property of a humane and considerate man,

who employed a judicious and benevolent gentleman to manage it.

"One thing, I can tell you," said Frank; "it was but a short time in the new agent's hands, when the dacent farmers stopped goin' to America."

"But Frank," said Owen, and he sighed on putting the question, "who is in Tubber Derg, now?"

"Why, thin, a son of ould Rousin' Red-head's, of Tullyvernon—young Con Roe, or the Ace o' Hearts—for he was called both by the youngsters—if you remimber him. His head's as red, an' double as big, even, as his father's was, an' you know that no hat would fit ould Con, until he sent his measure to Jemmy Lamb, the hatter. Dick Nugent put it out on him, that Jemmy always made Rousin' Red-head's hat, either upon the half-bushel pot, or a five-gallon keg of whiskey. 'Talkin' of the keg,' says Dick, 'for the matther o' that,' says he, 'divil a much differ the hat will persave; for the one'—meanin' ould Con's head, who was a hard dhrinker—'the one,' says Con, 'is as much a keg as the other—ha! ha! ha!' Dick met Rousin' Red-head another day; 'Arrah Con,' says he, 'why do you get your hats made upon a *pot,* man alive? Sure that's the rason that you're so fond o' *pot*een.' A quare mad crathur was Dick, an' would go forty miles for a fight. Poor fellow, he got his skull broke in a scrimmage betwixt the Redmonds and the O'Hanlons; an' his last words were, 'Bad luck

to you, Redmond—O'Hanlon, I never thought *you,* above all men, dead an' gone, would be the death o' me.' Poor fellow! he was for pacifyin' them, for a wondher, but instead o' that, he got pacified himself."

"An' how is young Con doin', Frank?"

"Hut, divil a much time he has to do aither well or ill, yit. There was four tenants on Tubber Derg since you left it, an' he's the fifth. It's hard to say how he'll do; but I believe he's the best o' thim, for so far. That may be owin' to the landlord. The rent's let down to him; an' I think he'll be able to take bread, an' good bread too, out of it."

"God send, poor man!"

"Now, Owen, would you like to go back to it?"

"I can't say that. I love the place, *but I suffered too much in it.* No; but I'll tell you, Frank, if there was e'er a snug farm near it that I could get rasonable, I'd take it."

Frank slapped his knee exultingly. "*Ma chuirp!*—do you say so, Owen?"

"Indeed, I do."

"Thin, upon my song, that's the luckiest thing I ever knew. There's, this blessed minute, a farm o' sixteen acres, that the Lacys is lavin'—goin' to America—an' it's to be set. They'll go the week afther next an' the house needn't be cowld, for you can come to it the very day afther they lave it."

"Well," said Owen, "I'm glad of that. Will

you come wid me to-morrow, an' we'll see about it?"

"To be sure I will; an' what's betther, too; the Agint is a son of ould Misther Rogerson's, a man that knows you an' the history o' them you came from, well. An', another thing, Owen! I tell you, whin it's abroad that *you* want to take the farm, there's not a man in the parish will bid agin you. You may know that yourself."

"I think, indeed, they would rather sarve me than otherwise," replied Owen; "an', in the name o' God, we'll see what can be done. Misther Rogerson, himself, 'ud spake to his son for me; so that I'll be sure of his intherest. Arrah, Frank, how is an ould friend o' mine, that I have a great regard for—poor Widow Murray?"

"Widow Murray. Poor woman, *she's* happy."

"You don't mane she's dead?"

"She's dead, Owen, and happy, I trust, in the Saviour. She died last spring was a two years."

"God be good to her sowl! An' are the childhre in her place still? It's she that was the dacent woman."

"Throth, they are; an' sorrow a betther doin' family in the parish than they are. It's they that'll be glad to see you, Owen. Many a time I seen their poor mother, heavens be her bed, lettin' down the tears, whin she used to be spakin' of you, or mintionin' how often you sarved her; espeshially, about some day or other that you previnted her cows from bein' canted for the

rint. She's dead now, an' God he knows, an honest hard-workin' woman she ever was."

"Dear me, Frank, isn't it a wondher to think how the people dhrop off! There's Widow Murray, one o' my ouldest frinds, an' Pether M'Mahon, an' Barny Lorinan—not to forget pleasant Rousin' Red-head—all taken away! Well!—well! Sure it's the will o' God! We can't be here always."

After much conversation, enlivened by the bottle, though but sparingly used on the part of Owen, the hour of rest arrived, when the family separated for the night.

The grey dawn of a calm beautiful summer's morning found Owen up and abroad, long before the family of honest Frank had risen. When dressing himself, with an intention of taking an early walk, he was asked by his friend why he stirred so soon, or if he—his host—should accompany him.

"No," replied Owen; "lie still; jist let me look over the counthry while it's asleep. Whin I'm musin' this a-way I don't like any body to be along wid me. I have a place to go an' see, too—an' a message—a tendher message, from poor Kathleen, to deliver, that I wouldn't wish a second person to hear. Sleep, Frank. I'll jist crush the head o' my pipe agin one o' the half-burned turf that the fire was raked wid, an' walk out for an hour or two. Afther our breakfast we'll go an' look about this new farm."

He sallied out as he spoke, and closed the door after him in that quiet thoughtful way for which

he was ever remarkable. The season was midsummer, and the morning wanted at least an hour of sun-rise. Owen ascended a little knoll, above Frank's house, on which he stood and surveyed the surrounding country with a pleasing but melancholy interest. As his eye rested on Tubber Derg, he felt the difference strongly between the imperishable glories of nature's works, and those which are executed by man. His house he would not have known, except by its site. It was not, in fact, the same house, but another which had been built in its stead. This disappointed and vexed him. An object on which his affections had been placed was removed. A rude stone house stood before him, rough and unplastered; against each end of which was built a stable and cow-house, sloping down from the gables to low doors at both sides; adjoining these rose two mounds of filth, large enough to be easily distinguished from the knoll on which he stood. He sighed as he contrasted it with the neat and beautiful farm-house, which shone there in his happy days, white as a lily, beneath the covering of the lofty beeches. There was no air of comfort, neatness, or independence, about it; on the contrary, everything betrayed the evidence of struggle and difficulty, joined, probably, to want both of skill and of capital. He was disappointed, and turned his gaze upon the general aspect of the country, and the houses in which either his old acquaintances or their children lived. The features of the landscape were, certainly, the same; but even here was a

change for the worse. The warmth of colouring, which wealth and independence give to the appearance of a cultivated country, was gone. Decay and coldness seemed to brood upon everything he saw. The houses, the farm-yards, the ditches, and enclosures, were all marked by the blasting proofs of national decline. Some exceptions there were to this disheartening prospect; but they were only sufficient to render the torn and ragged evidences of poverty, and its attendant—carelessness—more conspicuous. He left the knoll, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and putting it into his waistcoat pocket, ascended a larger hill, which led to the grave-yard where his child lay buried. On his way to this hill, which stood about half a mile distant, he passed a few houses of an humble description, with whose inhabitants he had been well acquainted. Some of these stood nearly as he remembered them; but others were roofless, with their dark mud gables either fallen in or partially broken down. He surveyed their smoke-coloured walls with sorrow; and looked, with a sense of the transient character of all man's works, upon the chickweed, docks, and nettles, which had shot up so rankly on the spot where many a chequered scene of joy and sorrow had flitted over the circumscribed circle of humble life, ere the annihilating wing of ruin swept away them and their habitations.

When he had ascended the hill, his eye took a wider range. The more distant and picturesque part of the country lay before him. "Ay!"

said he, in a soliloquy, "Lord bless us, how sthrange is this world!—an' what poor crathurs are men! There's the dark mountains, the hills, the rivers, an' the green glens, all the same; an' nothin' else amost but's changed! The very song of that blackbird, in thim thorn-bushes an' hazels below me, is like the voice of an ould friend to my ears. Och, indeed, hardly that, for even the voice of man changes; but that song is the same as I heard it for the best part o' my life. That mornin' star, too, is the same bright crathur up there that it ever was! God help us! Hardly any thing changes but man, an' he seems to think that he can never change; if one is to judge by his thoughtlessness, folly, an' wickedness!"

A smaller hill, around the base of which went the same imperfect road that crossed the glen of Tubber Derg, prevented him from seeing the grave-yard to which he was about to extend his walk. To this road he directed his steps. On reaching it he looked, still with a strong memory of former times, to the glen in which his children, himself, and his ancestors had all, during their day, played in the happy thoughtlessness of childhood and youth. But the dark and ragged house jarred upon his feelings. He turned from it with pain, and his eyes rested upon the still green valley with evident relief. He thought of his "buried flower"—"his goolden-haired darlin'," as he used to call her—and almost fancied that he saw her once more wandering waywardly through its tangled

mazes, gathering berries, or strolling along the green meadow, with a garland of gowans about her neck. Imagination, indeed, cannot heighten the image of the dead whom we love; but even if it could, there was no standard of ideal beauty in her father's mind beyond that of her own. She had been beautiful; but her beauty was pensive: a fair yet melancholy child; for the charm that ever encompassed her was one of sorrow and tenderness. Had she been volatile and mirthful, as children usually are, he would not have carried so far into his future life the love of her which he cherished. Another reason why he still loved her strongly, was a consciousness that her death had been occasioned by distress and misery; for, as he said, when looking upon the scenes of her brief but melancholy existence—"Avourneen machree, I remimber to see you pickin' the berries; but asthore—asthore—it wasn't for play you did it. It was to keep away the cuttin' of hunger from your heart! Of all our childhre every one said that *you* wor the M'Carthy—never sayin' much, but the heart in you ever full of goodness an' affection. God help me, I'm glad—an', now, that I'm comin' near it—loth to see her grave."

He had now reached the verge of the graveyard. Its fine old ruin stood there as usual, but not altogether without the symptoms of change. Some persons had, for the purposes of building, thrown down one of its most picturesque walls. Still its ruins clothed with ivy, its mullions moss-covered, its gothic arches and

tracery, gray with age, were the same in appearance as he had ever seen them.

On entering this silent palace of Death, he reverently uncovered his head, blessed himself, and, with feelings deeply agitated, sought the grave of his beloved child. He approached it; but a sudden transition from sorrow to indignation took place in his mind, even before he reached the spot on which she lay. "Sacred Mother!" he exclaimed, "who has dared to bury in our ground? Who has—what villain has attimpted to come in upon the M'Carthys—upon the M'Carthy Mores, of Tubber Derg? Who could—had I no friend to prev—— eh? Sacred Mother, what's this? Father of heaven forgive me! Forgive me, sweet Saviour, for this bad feelin' I got into! Who—who—could raise a head-stone over the darlin' o' my heart, widout one of us knowin' it! Who—who could do it? But let me see if I can make it out. Oh, who could do this blessed thing, for the poor an' the sorrowful?" He began, and with difficulty read as follows:—

"Here lies the body of Alice M'Carthy, the beloved daughter of Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, aged nine years. She was descended from the M'Carthy Mores.

"Requiescat in pace.

"This head-stone was raised over her by widow Murray, and her son, James Murray, out of grateful respect for Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, who never suffered the widow and orphan, or a distressed neighbour, to crave assistance from them in vain, until it pleased God to visit them with affliction."

"Thanks to you, my Saviour!" said Owen, dropping on his knees over the grave,—"thanks an' praise be to your holy name, that in the middle of my poverty—of all my poverty—I was not forgotten! nor my darlin' child let to lie widout honour in the grave of her family! Make me worthy, blessed Heaven, of what is written down upon me here! An' if the departed spirit of her that honoured the dust of my buried daughter is unhappy, oh, let her be relieved, an' let this act be remimbered to her! Bless her son, too, gracious Father, an' all belongin' to her on this earth! an', if it be your holy will, let them never know distress, or poverty, or wickedness!"

He then offered up a Pater Noster for the repose of his child's soul, and another for the kind-hearted and grateful widow Murray, after which he stood to examine the grave with greater accuracy.

There was, in fact, no grave visible. The little mound, under which lay what was once a touching image of innocence, beauty, and feeling, had sunk down to the level of the earth about it. He regretted this, inasmuch as it took away, he thought, part of her individuality. Still he knew it was the spot wherein she had been buried, and with much of that vivid feeling, and strong figurative language, inseparable from the habits of thought and language of the old Irish families, he delivered the mother's message to the inanimate dust of her once beautiful and heart-loved child. He spoke in a broken

voice, for even the mention of her name aloud, over the clay that contained her, struck with a fresh burst of sorrow upon his heart.

"Alley," he exclaimed, in Irish, "Alley, *nhien machree,* your father that loved *you* more nor he loved any other human crathur, brings a message to you from the mother of your heart, avourneen! She bid me call to see the spot where you're lyin', my buried flower, an' to tell you that we're not now, thanks be to God, as we wor whin you lived wid us. We are well to do now, *acushla oge machree,* an' not in hunger, an' sickness, an' misery, as we wor whin you suffered them all! You will love to hear this, pulse of our hearts, an' to know that, through all we suffered—an' bittherly we did suffer since you departed—we never let you out of our memory. No, *asthore villish,* we thought of you, an' cried afther our poor dead flower, many an' many's the time. An' she bid me tell you, darlin' of my heart, that we feel nothin' now so much as that you are not wid us to share our comfort an' our happiness. Oh, what wouldn't the mother give to have you back wid her; but it can't be—an' what wouldn't I give to have you before my eyes agin, in health an' in life—but it can't be. The lovin' mother sent this message to you, Alley. Take it from her; she bid me tell you that we are well an' happy; our name is pure, and, like yourself, widout spot or stain. Won't you pray for us before God, an' get him an' his blessed Mother to look on us wid favour an' compassion? Farewell, Alley asthore! May

you sleep in peace, an' rest on the breast of your great Father in Heaven, until we all meet in happiness together. It's your father that's spakin' to you, our lost flower; an' the hand that often smoothed your goolden head is now upon your grave."

He wiped his eyes as he concluded, and after lifting a little of the clay from her grave, he tied it carefully up, and put it into his pocket.

Having left the grave-yard, he retraced his steps towards Frank Farrell's house. The sun had now risen, and as Owen ascended the larger of the two hills which we have mentioned, he stood again to view the scene that stretched beneath him. About an hour before all was still; the whole country lay motionless, as if the land had been a land of the dead. The mountains, in the distance, were covered with the thin mists of morning; the milder and richer parts of the landscape had appeared in that dim gray distinctness which gives to distant objects such a clear outline. With the exception of the blackbird's song, everything seemed as if stricken into silence; there was not a breeze stirring; both animate and inanimate nature reposed as if in a trance; the very trees appeared asleep, and their leaves motionless, as if they had been of marble. But now the scene was changed. The sun had flung his splendour upon the mountain-tops, from which the mists were tumbling in broken fragments to the valleys between them. A thousand birds poured their songs upon the ear; the breeze was up, and the columns of smoke

from the farm-houses and cottages played, as if in frolic, in the air. A white haze was beginning to rise from the meadows; early teams were afoot; and labourers going abroad to their employment. The lakes in the distance shone like mirrors; and the clear springs on the mountain sides glittered in the sun, like gems on which the eye could scarcely rest. Life, and light, and motion, appear to be inseparable. The dew of morning lay upon nature like a brilliant veil, realising the beautiful image of Horace, as applied to woman:

Vultus nimium lubricus aspici.

By-and-by the songs of the early workmen were heard; Nature had awoke; and Owen, whose heart was strongly, though unconsciously, alive to the influence of natural religion, participated in the general elevation of the hour, and sought with freshened spirits the house of his entertainer.

As he entered this hospitable roof, the early industry of his friend's wife presented him with a well-swept hearth and a pleasant fire, before which had been placed the identical chair that they had appropriated to his own use. Frank was enjoying "a blast o' the pipe," after having risen; to which luxury the return of Owen gave additional zest and placidity. In fact, Owen's presence communicated a holiday spirit to the family; a spirit, too, which declined not for a moment during the period of his visit.

"Frank," said Owen, "to tell you the thruth,

I'm not half plased wid you this mornin'. I think you didn't thrate me as I ought to expect to be thrated."

"Musha, Owen M'Carthy, how is that?"

"Why, you said nothin' about widow Murray raisin' a head-stone over our child. You kep me in the dark there, Frank, an' sich a start I never got as I did this mornin', in the grave-yard beyant."

"Upon my sowl, Owen, it wasn't my fau't, nor any of our fau'ts; for, to tell you the thruth, we had so much to think and discoorse of last night, that it never sthruck me, good or bad. Indeed it was Bridget that put it first in my head, afther you wint out, an' thin it was too late. Ay, poor woman, the dacent strain was ever in her, the heavens be her bed!"

"Frank, if any one of her family was to abuse me till the dogs wouldn't lick my blood, I'd only give them back good for evil afther that. Oh, Frank, that goes to my heart! To put a head-stone over my weeny goolden-haired darlin', for the sake of the little thrifles I sarved thim in! Well!—may none belonging to her ever know poverty or hardship! but if they do, an' that I have it——. How-an'-iver, no matther. God bless thim! God bless thim! Wait till Kathleen hears it!"

"An' the best of it was, Owen, that she never expected to see one of your faces. But, Owen, you think too much about that child. Let us talk of something else. You've seen Tubber Derg wanst more?"

"I did; an' I love it still, in spite of the state it's in."

"Ah! it's different from what it was in your happy days. I was spakin' to Bridget about the farm, an' she advises us to go, widout losin' a minute, an' take it if we can."

"It's near this place I'll die, Frank. I'd not rest in my grave if I wasn't berrid among my own; so we'll take the farm if possible."

"Well, then, Bridget, hurry the breakfast, avourneen; an' in the name o' goodness, we'll set out, an' clinch the business this very day."

Owen, as we said, was prompt in following up his determinations. After breakfast they saw the agent and his father, for both lived together. Old Rogerson had been intimately acquainted with the M'Carthys, and, as Frank had anticipated, used his influence with the agent in procuring for the son of his old friend and acquaintance the farm which he sought.

"Jack," said the old gentleman, "you don't probably know the history and character of the Tubber Derg M'Carthys, so well as I do. No man ever required the written bond of a M'-Carthy; and it was said of them, and is said still, that the widow and orphan, the poor man or the stranger, never sought their assistance in vain. I, myself, will go security, if necessary, for Owen M'Carthy."

"Sir," replied Owen, "I'm thankful to you; I'm grateful to you. But I wouldn't take the farm, or bid for it at all, unless I could bring forrid enough to stock it as I wish, an' to lay

in all that's wantin' to work it well. It 'ud be useless for me to take it—to struggle a year or two—impoverish the land—an' thin run away out of it. No, no; I have what'll put me upon it wid dacency an' comfort."

"Then, since my father has taken such an interest in you, M'Carthy, you must have the farm. We shall get leases prepared, and the business completed in a few days; for I go to Dublin on this day week. Father, I now remember the character of this family; and I remember, too, the sympathy which was felt for one of them, who was harshly ejected, about seventeen or eighteen years ago, out of the lands on which his forefathers had lived, I understand, for centuries."

"I am that man, Sir," returned Owen. "It's too long a story to tell now; but it was only out o' *part* of the lands, Sir, that I was put. What I held was but a poor patch compared to what the family held in my grandfather's time. A great part of it went out of our hands at his death."

"It was very kind of you, Misther Rogerson, to offer to go security for him," said Frank; "but if security was wantin', Sir, I'd not be willin' to let anybody but myself back him. I'd go all I'm worth in the world—an' by my sowl, double as much—for the same man."

"I know that, Frank, an' I thank you; but I could put security in Mr. Rogerson's hands, here, if it was wanted. Good mornin' an' thank you both, gintlemen. To tell yez the thruth,"

he added, with a smile, "I long to be among my ould friends—manin' the people, an' the hills, an' the green fields of Tubber Derg—agin; an' thanks be to Goodness, sure I will soon."

In fact, wherever Owen went, within the bounds of his native parish, his name, to use a significant phrase of the people, was before him. His arrival at Frank Farrell's was now generally known by all his acquaintances, and the numbers who came to see him were almost beyond belief. During the two or three successive days, he went amongst his old "*cronies;*" and no sooner was his arrival at any particular house intimated, than the neighbours all flocked to him. Scythes were left idle, spades were stuck in the earth, and work neglected for the time being; all crowded about him with a warm and friendly interest, not proceeding from idle curiosity, but from affection and respect for the man.

The interview between him and widow Murray's children was affecting. Owen felt deeply the delicate and touching manner in which they had evinced their gratitude for the services he had rendered them; and young Murray remembered, with a strong gush of feeling, the distresses under which they lay when Owen had assisted them. Their circumstances, owing to the strenuous exertions of the widow's eldest son, soon afterwards improved; and, in accordance with the sentiments of hearts naturally grateful, they had taken that method of testifying what they felt. Indeed, so well had Owen's unparalleled affection for his favourite child been

known, that it was the general opinion about Tubber Derg that her death had broken his heart.

"Poor Owen! he's dead," they used to say; "the death of his weeny one, while he was away in Dublin, gave him the finishin' blow. It broke his heart."

Before the week was expired, Owen had the satisfaction of depositing the lease of his new farm, held at a moderate rent, in the hands of Frank Farrell; who, tying it up along with his own, secured it in the "black chest." Nothing remained now but to return home forthwith, and communicate the intelligence to Kathleen. Frank had promised, as soon as the Lacys should vacate the house, to come with a long train of cars, and a number of his neighbours, in order to transfer Owen's family and furniture to his new dwelling. Everything, therefore, had been arranged; and Owen had nothing to do but hold himself in readiness for the welcome arrival of Frank and his friends.

Owen, however, had no sense of enjoyment when not participated in by his beloved Kathleen. If he felt sorrow, it was less as a personal feeling than as a calamity to her. If he experienced happiness, it was doubly sweet to him as reflected from his Kathleen. All this was mutual between them. Kathleen loved *Owen* precisely as he loved Kathleen. Nor let our readers suppose that such characters are not in humble life. It is in humble life, where the springs of feeling are not corrupted by dissimulation and evil

knowledge,—that the purest, and tenderest, and strongest virtues are to be found.

As Owen approached his home, he could not avoid contrasting the circumstances of his return *now* with those under which, almost broken-hearted after his journey to Dublin, he presented himself to his sorrowing and bereaved wife about eighteen years before. He raised his hat, and thanked God for the success which had, since that period, attended him, and, immediately after his silent thanksgiving, entered the house.

His welcome, our readers may be assured, was tender and affectionate. The whole family gathered about him, and, on his informing them that they were once more about to reside on a farm adjoining to their beloved Tubber Derg, Kathleen's countenance brightened, and the tear of delight gushed to her eyes.

"God be praised, Owen," she exclaimed; "we will have the ould place afore our eyes, an' what is betther, we will be near where Alley is lyin'. But that's true, Owen," she added, "did you give the light of our hearts the mother's message?"

Owen paused, and his features were slightly overshadowed, but only by the solemnity of the feeling.

"Kathleen," said he, "I gave her your message; but, avourneen, I have sthrange news for you about Alley."

"What, Owen? What is it, acushla? Tell me quick!"

"The blessed child was not neglected: no, but she was honoured in our absence. A head-stone was put over her, an' stands there purtily this minute."

"Mother of Glory, Owen!"

"It's thruth. Widow Murray an' her son Jemmy put it up, wid words upon it that brought the tears to my eyes. Widow Murray is dead, but her childher's doin' well. May God bless an' prosper them, an' make her happy!"

The delighted mother's heart was not proof against the widow's gratitude, expressed, as it had been, in a manner so affecting. She rocked herself to and fro in silence, whilst the tears fell in showers down her cheeks. The grief, however, which this affectionate couple felt for their child, was not always such as the reader has perceived it to be. It was rather a revival of emotions that had long slumbered, but never died; and the associations arising from the journey to Tubber Derg, had thrown them back, by the force of memory, almost to the period of her death. At times, indeed, their imagination had conjured her up strongly, but the present was an epoch in the history of their sorrow.

There is little more to be said. Sorrow was soon succeeded by cheerfulness and the glow of expected pleasure, which is ever the more delightful as the pleasure is pure. In about a week their old neighbours, with their carts and cars, arrived; and before the day was closed on which Owen removed to his new residence, he

found himself once more sitting at his own hearth, among the friends of his youth, and the companions of his maturer years. Ere the twelvemonth elapsed, he had his house perfectly white, and as nearly resembling that of Tubber Derg in its better days as possible. About two years[78] ago we saw him one evening in the month of June, as he sat on a bench beside the door, singing with a happy heart his favourite song of "*Colleen dhas crootha na mo.*" It was about an hour before sunset. The house stood on a gentle eminence, beneath which a sweep of green meadow stretched away to the skirts of Tubber Derg. Around him was a country naturally fertile, and in spite of the national depression still beautiful to contemplate. Kathleen and two servant maids were milking, and the whole family were assembled about the door.

"Well, childher," said the father, "didn't I tell yez the bitther mornin' we left Tubber Derg, not to cry or be disheartened—that 'there was a good God above, who might do somethin' for us *yet?*' I never *did* give up my trust in Him, an' I never *will*. You see, afther all our little troubles, he has wanst more brought us together, an' made us happy. Praise an' glory to his name!"

I looked at him as he spoke. He had raised his eyes to heaven, and a gleam of elevated devotion, perhaps worthy of being called sublime, irradiated his features. The sun, too, in setting, fell upon his broad temples and iron-gray locks,

with a light solemn and religious. The effect to me, who knew his noble character, and all that he had suffered, was as if the eye of God then rested upon the decline of a virtuous man's life with approbation;—as if he had lifted up the glory of his countenance upon him. Would that many of his thoughtless countrymen had been present! They might have blushed for their crimes, and been content to sit and learn wisdom at the feet of Owen M'Carthy.

NEAL MALONE

There never was a greater souled or doughtier tailor than little Neal Malone. Though but four feet four in height, he paced the earth with the courage and confidence of a giant; nay, one would have imagined that he walked as if he feared the world itself was about to give way under him. Let no one dare to say in future that a tailor is but the ninth part of a man. That reproach has been gloriously taken away from the character of the cross-legged corporation by Neal Malone. He has wiped it off like a stain from the collar of a second-hand coat; he has pressed this wrinkle out of the lying front of antiquity; he has drawn together this rent in the respectability of his profession. No. By him who was breeches-maker to the gods—that is, except, like Highlanders, they eschewed inexpressibles—by him who cut Jupiter's frieze jocks for winter, and eke by the bottom of his thimble, we swear, that Neal Malone was *more* than the ninth part of a man!

Setting aside the Patagonians, we maintain that two-thirds of mortal humanity were comprised in Neal; and, perhaps, we might venture to assert, that two-thirds of Neal's humanity were equal to six-thirds of another man's. It is right well known that Alexander the Great was

a little man, and we doubt whether, had Alexander the Great been bred to the tailoring business, he would have exhibited so much of the hero as Neal Malone. Neal was descended from a fighting family, who had signalised themselves in as many battles as ever any single hero of antiquity fought. His father, his grandfather, and his great grandfather, were all fighting men, and his ancestors in general, up, probably, to Con of the Hundred Battles himself. No wonder, therefore, that Neal's blood should cry out against the cowardice of his calling; no wonder that he should be an epitome of all that was valorous and heroic in a peaceable man, for we neglected to inform the reader that Neal, though "bearing no base mind," never fought any man in his own person. That, however, deducted nothing from his courage. If he did not fight, it was simply because he found cowardice universal. No man would engage him; his spirit blazed in vain; his thirst for battle was doomed to remain unquenched, except by whiskey, and this only increased it. In short, he could find no foe. He has often been known to challenge the first cudgel-players and pugilists of the parish; to provoke men of fourteen stone weight; and to bid mortal defiance to faction heroes of all grades—but in vain. There was that in him which told them that an encounter with Neal would strip them of their laurels. Neal saw all this with a lofty indignation; he deplored the degeneracy of the times, and thought it hard that the descendant of such

a fighting family should be doomed to pass through life peaceably, whilst so many excellent rows and riots took place around him. It was a calamity to see every man's head broken but his own; a dismal thing to observe his neighbours go about with their bones in bandages, yet his untouched; and his friends beat black and blue, whilst his own cuticle remained undiscoloured.

"Blur-an'-agers!" exclaimed Neal one day, when half-tipsy in the fair, "am I never to get a bit of fightin'? Is there no cowardly spalpeen to stand afore Neal Malone? Be this an' be that, *I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'!* I'm disgracin' my relations by the life I'm ladin'! Will none o' ye fight me aither for love, money, or whiskey—frind or inimy, an' bad luck to ye? I don't care a *traneen* which, only out o' pure frindship, let us have a morsel o' the rale kick-up, 'tany rate. Frind or inimy, I say agin, if you regard me; sure *that* makes no differ, only let us have the fight."

This excellent heroism was all wasted; Neal could not find a single adversary. Except he divided himself like Hotspur, and went to buffets one hand against the other, there was no chance of a fight; no person to be found sufficiently magnanimous to encounter the tailor. On the contrary, every one of his friends—or, in other words, every man in the parish—was ready to support him. He was clapped on the back, until his bones were nearly dislocated in his body; and his hand shaken, until his arm lost its cunning at the needle for half a week

afterwards. This, to be sure, was a bitter business—a state of being past endurance. Every man was his friend—no man was his enemy. A desperate position for any person to find himself in, but doubly calamitous to a martial tailor.

Many a dolorous complaint did Neal make upon the misfortune of having none to wish him ill; and what rendered this hardship doubly oppressive, was the unlucky fact that no exertions of his, however offensive, could procure him a single foe. In vain did he insult, abuse, and malign all his acquaintances. In vain did he father upon them all the rascality and villany he could think of; he lied against them with a force and originality that would have made many a modern novelist blush for want of invention—but all to no purpose. The world for once became astonishingly Christian; it paid back all his efforts to excite its resentment with the purest of charity; when Neal struck it on the one cheek, it meekly turned unto him the other. It could scarcely be expected that Neal would bear this. To have the whole world in friendship with a man is beyond doubt rather an affliction. Not to have the face of a single enemy to look upon, would decidedly be considered a deprivation of many agreeable sensations by most people, as well as by Neal Malone. Let who might sustain a loss, or experience a calamity, it was a matter of indifference to Neal. They were *only* his friends, and he troubled neither his head nor his heart about them.

Heaven help us! There is no man without his trials; and Neal, the reader perceives, was not exempt from his. What did it avail him that he carried a cudgel ready for all hostile contingencies? or knit his brows and shook his *kippeen* at the fiercest of his fighting friends? The moment he appeared, they softened into downright cordiality. His presence was the signal of peace; for, notwithstanding his unconquerable propensity to warfare, he went abroad as the genius of unanimity, though carrying in his bosom the redoubtable disposition of a warrior; just as the sun, though the source of light himself, is said to be dark enough at bottom.

It could not be expected that Neal, with whatever fortitude he might bear his other afflictions, could bear such tranquillity like a hero. To say that he bore it as one, would be to basely surrender his character; for what hero ever bore a state of tranquillity with courage? It affected his cutting out! It produced what Burton calls "a windie melancholie," which was nothing else than an accumulation of courage that had no means of escaping, if courage can without indignity be ever said to escape. He sat uneasy on his lap-board. Instead of cutting out soberly, he flourished his scissors as if he were heading a faction; he wasted much chalk by scoring his cloth in wrong places, and even caught his hot goose without a holder. These symptoms alarmed his friends, who persuaded him to go to a doctor. Neal went, to satisfy

them; but he knew that no prescription could drive the courage out of him—that he was too far gone in heroism to be made a coward of by apothecary stuff. Nothing in the pharmacopœia could physic him into a pacific state. His disease was simply the want of an enemy, and an unaccountable superabundance of friendship on the part of his acquaintances. How could a doctor remedy this by a prescription? Impossible. The doctor, indeed, recommended bloodletting; but to lose blood in a peaceable manner was not only cowardly, but a bad cure for courage. Neal declined it: he would lose no blood for any man until he could not help it; which was giving the character of a hero at a single touch. *His* blood was not to be thrown away in this manner; the only lancet ever applied to his relations was the cudgel, and Neal scorned to abandon the principles of his family.

His friends finding that he reserved his blood for more heroic purposes than dastardly phlebotomy, knew not what to do with him. His perpetual exclamation was, as we have already stated, *"I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'!"* They did everything in their power to cheer him with the hope of a drubbing; told him he lived in an excellent country for a man afflicted with his malady; and promised, if it were at all possible, to create him a private enemy or two, who, they hoped in heaven, might trounce him to some purpose.

This sustained him for a while; but as day after day passed, and no appearance of action

presented itself, he could not choose but increase in courage. His soul, like a sword blade too long in the scabbard, was beginning to get fuliginous by inactivity. He looked upon the point of his own needle, and the bright edge of his scissors, with a bitter pang, when he thought of the spirit rusting within him: he meditated fresh insults, studied new plans, and hunted out cunning devices for provoking his acquaintances to battle, until by degrees he began to confound his own brain, and to commit more grievous oversights in his business than ever. Sometimes he sent home to one person a coat, with the legs of a pair of trousers attached to it for sleeves, and dispatched to another the arms of the aforesaid coat tacked together as a pair of trousers. Sometimes the coat was made to button behind instead of before, and he frequently placed the pockets in the lower part of the skirts, as if he had been in league with cut-purses.

This was a melancholy situation, and his friends pitied him accordingly.

"Don't be cast down, Neal," said they, "your friends feel for you, poor fellow."

"Divil carry my frinds," replied Neal, "sure there's not one o' yez frindly enough to be my inimy, Tara-an'-ounze! what'll I do? *I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'!*"

Seeing that their consolation was thrown away upon him, they resolved to leave him to his fate; which they had no sooner done than Neal had thoughts of taking to the *Skiomachia* as a last remedy. In this mood he looked with consider-

able antipathy at his own shadow for several nights; and it is not to be questioned, but that some hard battles would have taken place between them, were it not for the cunning of the shadow, which declined to fight him in any other position than with its back to the wall. This occasioned him to pause, for the wall was a fearful antagonist, inasmuch that it knew not when it was beaten; but there was still an alternative left. He went to the garden one clear day about noon, and hoped to have a bout with the shade, free from interruption. Both approached, apparently eager for the combat, and resolved to conquer or die, when a villanous cloud happening to intercept the light, gave the shadow an opportunity of disappearing; and Neal found himself once more without an opponent.

"It's aisy known," said Neal, "you haven't the *blood* in you, or you'd come to the scratch like a man."

He now saw that fate was against him, and that any further hostility towards the shadow was only a tempting of Providence. He lost his health, spirits, and everything but his courage. His countenance became pale and peaceful looking; the bluster departed from him; his body shrunk up like a withered parsnip. Thrice was he compelled to take in his clothes, and thrice did he ascertain that much of his time would be necessarily spent in pursuing his retreating person through the solitude of his almost deserted garments.

God knows it is difficult to form a correct opinion upon a situation so paradoxical as Neal's was. To be reduced to skin and bone by the downright friendship of the world, was, as the sagacious reader will admit, next to a miracle. We appeal to the conscience of any man who finds himself without an enemy, whether he be not a greater skeleton than the tailor; we will give him fifty guineas provided he can show a calf to his leg. We know he could not; for the tailor had none, and that was because he had not an enemy. No man in friendship with the world ever has calves to his legs. To sum up all in a paradox of our own invention, for which we claim the full credit of originality, we now assert, that *more men have risen in the world by the injury of their enemies, than have risen by the kindness of their friends.* You may take this, reader, in any sense; apply it to hanging if you like, it is still immutably and immovably true.

One day Neal sat cross-legged, as tailors usually sit, in the act of pressing a pair of breeches; his hands were placed, backs up, upon the handle of his goose, and his chin rested upon the back of his hands. To judge from his sorrowful complexion one would suppose that he sat rather to be sketched as a picture of misery, or of heroism in distress, than for the industrious purpose of pressing the seams of a garment. There was a great deal of New Burlington-street pathos in his countenance; his face, like the times, was rather out of joint; "the sun was just

setting, and his golden beams fell, with a saddened splendour, athwart the tailor's "——the reader may fill up the picture.

In this position sat Neal, when Mr. O'Connor, the schoolmaster, whose inexpressibles he was turning for the third time, entered the workshop. Mr. O'Connor, himself, was as finished a picture of misery as the tailor. There was a patient subdued kind of expression in his face, which indicated a very fair portion of calamity; his eye seemed charged with affliction of the first water; on each side of his nose might be traced two dry channels which, no doubt, were full enough while the tropical rains of his countenance lasted. Altogether, to conclude from appearances, it was a dead match in affliction between him and the tailor; both seemed sad, fleshless, and unthriving.

"Misther O'Connor," said the tailor, when the schoolmaster entered, "won't you be pleased to sit down?"

Mr. O'Connor sat; and, after wiping his forehead, laid his hat upon the lap-board, put his half handkerchief in his pocket, and looked upon the tailor. The tailor, in return, looked upon Mr. O'Connor; but neither of them spoke for some minutes. Neal, in fact, appeared to be wrapped up in his own misery, and Mr. O'Connor in his; or, as we often have much gratuitous sympathy for the distresses of our friends, we question but the tailor was wrapped up in Mr. O'Connor's misery, and Mr. O'Connor in the tailor's.

Mr. O'Connor at length said—"Neal, are my inexpressibles finished?"

"I am now pressin' your inexpressibles," replied Neal; "but, be my sowl, Mr. O'Connor, it's not your inexpressibles I'm thinkin' of. I'm not the ninth part of what I was. I'd hardly make paddin' for a collar now."

"Are you able to carry a staff still, Neal?"

"I've a light hazel one that's handy," said the tailor; "but where's the use of carryin' it, whin I can get no one to fight wid. Sure I'm disgracing my relations by the life I'm leadin'. I'll go to my grave widout ever batin' a man, or bein' bate myself; that's the vexation. Divil the row ever I was able to kick up in my life; *so that I'm fairly bluemowlded for want of a batin'*. But if you have patience———,"

"Patience!" said Mr. O'Connor, with a shake of the head, that was perfectly disastrous even to look at; "patience, did you say, Neal?"

"Ay," said Neal, "an', by my sowl, if you deny that I said patience, I'll break your head!"

"Ah, Neal," returned the other, "I don't deny it—for though I am teaching philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics, every day in my life, yet I'm learning patience myself both night and day. No, Neal; I have forgotten to deny any thing. I have not been guilty of a contradiction, out of my own school, for the last fourteen years. I once expressed the shadow of a doubt about twelve years ago, but ever since I have abandoned even doubting. That doubt was the last expiring effort at maintaining my domestic authority—but I suffered for it."

"Well," said Neal, "if you have patience,

I'll tell you what afflicts me from beginnin' to endin'."

"I *will* have patience," said Mr. O'Connor, and he accordingly heard a dismal and indignant tale from the tailor.

"You have told me that fifty times over," said Mr. O'Connor, after hearing the story. "Your spirit is too martial for a pacific life. If you follow my advice, I will teach you how to ripple the calm current of your existence to some purpose. *Marry a wife.* For twenty-five years I have given instructions in three branches, viz.—philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics—I am also well versed in matrimony, and I declare that, upon my misery, and by the contents of all my afflictions, it is my solemn and melancholy opinion, that, if you marry a wife, you will, before three months pass over your concatenated state, not have a single complaint to make touching a superabundance of peace and tranquillity, or a love of fighting."

"Do you mane to say that any woman would make me afeard?" said the tailor, deliberately rising up and getting his cudgel. "I'll thank you merely to go over the words agin, till I thrash you widin an inch o' your life. That's all."

"Neal," said the schoolmaster, meekly, "I won't fight; I have been too often subdued ever to presume on the hope of a single victory. My spirit is long since evaporated; I am like one of your own shreds, a mere selvage. Do you not know how much my habilaments have shrunk in,

even within the last five years? Hear me, Neal; and venerate my words as if they proceeded from the lips of a prophet. If you wish to taste the luxury of being subdued—if you are, as you say, *blue-moulded for want of a beating,* and sick at heart of a peaceful existence—why, MARRY A WIFE. Neal, send my breeches home with all haste, *for they are wanted,* you understand. Farewell!"

Mr. O'Connor, having thus expressed himself, departed, and Neal stood, with the cudgel in his hand, looking at the door out of which he passed, with an expression of fierceness, contempt, and reflection, strongly blended on the ruins of his once heroic visage.

Many a man has happiness within his reach if he but knew it. The tailor had been, hitherto, miserable because he pursued a wrong object. The schoolmaster, however, suggested a train of thought upon which Neal now fastened with all the ardour of a chivalrous temperament. Nay, he wondered that the family spirit should have so completely seized upon the fighting side of his heart, as to preclude all thoughts of matrimony; for he could not but remember that his relations were as ready for marriage as for fighting. To doubt this, would have been to throw a blot upon his own escutcheon. He, therefore, very prudently asked himself, to whom, if he did not marry, should he transmit his courage. He was a single man, and, dying as such, he would be the sole depository of his own valour, which, like Junius's secret, must perish with him. If he

could have left it, as a legacy, to such of his friends as were most remarkable for cowardice, why the case would be altered; but this was impossible—and he had now no other means of preserving it to posterity than by creating a posterity to inherit it. He saw, too, that the world was likely to become convulsed. Wars, as every body knew, were certainly to break out; and would it not be an excellent opportunity for being father to a colonel, or, perhaps, a general, that might astonish the world.

The change visible in Neal, after the schoolmaster's last visit, absolutely thunderstruck all who knew him. The clothes, which he had rashly taken in to fit his shrivelled limbs, were once more let out. The tailor expanded with a new spirit; his joints ceased to be supple, as in the days of his valour; his eye became less fiery, but more brilliant. From being martial, he got desperately gallant; but, somehow, he could not afford to act the hero and lover at the same time. This, perhaps, would be too much to expect from a tailor. His policy was better. He resolved to bring all his available energy to bear upon the charms of whatever fair nymph he should select for the honour of matrimony; to waste his spirit in fighting would, therefore, be a deduction from the single purpose in view.

The transition from war to love is by no means so remarkable as we might at first imagine. We quote Jack Falstaff in proof of this, or, if the reader be disposed to reject our authority, then we quote Ancient Pistol himself—both of whom

we consider as the most finished specimens of heroism that ever carried a safe skin. Acres would have been a hero had he worn gloves to prevent the courage from oozing out at his palms, or not felt such an unlucky antipathy to the "snug lying in the Abbey;" and as for Captain Bobadil, he never had an opportunity of putting his plan, for vanquishing an army, into practice. We fear, indeed, that neither his character, nor Ben Jonson's knowledge of human nature, is properly understood; for it certainly could not be expected that a man, whose spirit glowed to encounter a whole host, could, without tarnishing his dignity, if closely pressed, condescend to fight an individual. But as these remarks on courage may be felt by the reader as an invidious introduction of a subject disagreeable to him, we beg to hush it for the present and return to the tailor.

No sooner had Neal begun to feel an inclination to matrimony, than his friends knew that his principles had veered, by the change now visible in his person and deportment. They saw he had *ratted* from courage, and joined love. Heretofore his life had been all winter, darkened by storm and hurricane. The fiercer virtues had played the devil with him; every word was thunder, every look lightning; but now all that had passed away;—before, he was the *fortiter in re,* at present he was the *suaviter in modo.* His existence was perfect spring—beautifully vernal. All the amiable and softer qualities began to bud about his heart; a genial warmth was diffused

over him; his soul got green within him; every day was serene, and if a cloud happened to become visible, there was a roguish rainbow astride of it, on which sat a beautiful Iris that laughed down at him, and seemed to say, "why the dickens, Neal, don't you marry a wife?"

Neal could not resist the afflatus which descended on him; an ethereal light dwelled, he thought, upon the face of nature; the colour of the cloth, which he cut out from day to day, was, to his enraptured eye, like the colour of cupid's wings—all purple; his visions were worth their weight in gold; his dreams, a credit to the bed he slept on; and his feelings, like blind puppies, young and alive to the milk of love and kindness which they drew from his heart. Most of this delight escaped the observation of the world, for Neal, like your true lover, became shy and mysterious. It is difficult to say what he resembled; no dark lantern ever had more light shut up within itself, than Neal had in his soul, although his friends were not aware of it. They knew, indeed, that he had turned his back upon valour; but beyond this their knowledge did not extend.

Neal was shrewd enough to know that what he felt must be love;—nothing else could distend him with happiness, until his soul felt light and bladder-like, but love. As an oyster opens, when expecting the tide, so did his soul expand at the contemplation of matrimony. Labour ceased to be a trouble to him; he sang and sewed from morning to night; his hot goose no longer burned

him, for his heart was as hot as his goose; the vibrations of his head, at each successive stitch, were no longer sad and melancholy. There was a buoyant shake of exultation in them which showed that his soul was placid and happy within him.

Endless honour be to Neal Malone for the originality with which he managed the tender sentiment! He did not, like your commonplace lovers, first discover a pretty girl, and afterwards become enamoured of her. No such thing, he had the passion prepared beforehand—cut out and made-up as it were, ready for any girl whom it might fit. This was falling in love in the abstract, and let no man condemn it without a trial; for many a long-winded argument could be urged in its defence. It is always wrong to commence business without capital, and Neal had a good stock to begin with. All we beg is, that the reader will not confound it with Platonism, which never marries; but he is at full liberty to call it Socratism, which takes unto itself a wife, and suffers accordingly.

Let no one suppose that Neal forgot the schoolmaster's kindness, or failed to be duly grateful for it. Mr. O'Connor was the first person whom he consulted touching his passion. With a cheerful soul he waited on that melancholy and gentleman-like man, and in the very luxury of his heart told him that he was in love.

"In love, Neal!" said the schoolmaster. "May I inquire with whom?"

"Wid nobody in particular, yet," replied Neal; "but of late I'm got divilish fond o' the girls in general."

"And do you call that being in love, Neal?" said Mr. O'Connor.

"Why, what else would I call it?" returned the tailor. "Amn't I fond of them?"

"Then it must be what is termed the Universal Passion, Neal;" observed Mr. O'Connor, "although it is the first time I have seen such an illustration of it as you present in your own person."

"I wish you would advise me how to act," said Neal; "I'm as happy as a prince since I began to get fond o' them, an' to think of marriage."

The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked rather miserable. Neal rubbed his hands with glee, and looked perfectly happy. The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked more miserable than before. Neal's happiness also increased on the second rubbing.

Now, to tell the secret at once, Mr. O'Connor would not have appeared so miserable, were it not for Neal's happiness; nor Neal so happy, were it not for Mr. O'Connor's misery. It was all the result of *contrast;* but this you will not understand unless you be deeply read in modern novels.

Mr. O'Connor, however, was a man of sense, who knew, upon this principle, that the longer he continued to shake his head, the more miserable he must become, and the more also would he increase Neal's happiness; but he had no intention

of increasing Neal's happiness at his own expense —for, upon the same hypothesis, it would have been for Neal's interest had he remained shaking his head there, and getting miserable until the day of judgment. He consequently declined giving the third shake, for he thought that plain conversation was, after all, more significant and forcible than the most eloquent nod, however ably translated.

"Neal," said he, "could you, by stretching your imagination, contrive to rest contented with nursing your passion in solitude, and love the sex at a distance?"

"How could I nurse and mind my business?" replied the tailor. "I'll never nurse so long as I'll have the wife; and as for 'magination it depends upon the grain of it, whether I can stretch it or not. I don't know that I ever made a coat of it in my life."

"You don't understand me, Neal," said the schoolmaster. "In recommending marriage, I was only driving one evil out of you by introducing another. Do you think that, if you abandoned all thoughts of a wife, you would get heroic again?—that is, would you take once more to the love of fighting?"

"There is no doubt but I would," said the tailor: "if I miss the wife, I'll kick up such a dust as never was seen in the parish, an' you're the first man that I'll lick. But now that I'm in love," he continued, "sure I ought to look out for the wife."

"Ah! Neal," said the schoolmaster, "you are

tempting destiny: your temerity be, with all its melancholy consequences, upon your own head."

"Come," said the tailor, "it wasn't to hear you groaning to the tune of 'Dhrimmindhoo,' or 'The ould woman rockin' her cradle,' that I came; but to know if you could help me in makin' out the wife. That's the discoorse."

"Look at me, Neal," said the schoolmaster, solemnly; "I am at this moment, and have been any time for the last fifteen years, a living *caveto* against matrimony. I do not think that earth possesses such a luxury as a single solitary life. Neal, the monks of old were happy men: they were all fat and had double chins; and, Neal, I tell you, that all fat men are in general happy. Care cannot come at them so readily as at a thin man; before it gets through the strong outworks of flesh and blood with which they are surrounded, it becomes treacherous to its original purpose, joins the cheerful spirits it meets in the system, and dances about the heart in all the madness of mirth; just like a sincere ecclesiastic, who comes to lecture a good fellow against drinking, but who forgets his lecture over his cups, and is laid under the table with such success, that he either never comes to finish his lecture, or comes often to be laid under the table. Look at me, Neal, how wasted, fleshless, and miserable, I stand before you. You know how my garments have shrunk in, and what a solid man I was before marriage. Neal, pause, I beseech you: otherwise you stand a strong chance of becoming a nonentity like myself."

"I don't care what I become," said the tailor; "I can't think that you'd be so unrasonable as to expect that any of the Malones should pass out of the world widout either bein' bate or marrid. Have reason, Mr. O'Connor, an' if you can help me to the wife, I promise to take in your coat the next time for nothin'."

"Well, then," said Mr. O'Connor, "what would you think of the butcher's daughter, Biddy Neil? You have always had a thirst for blood, and here you may have it gratified in an innocent manner, should you ever become sanguinary again. 'Tis true, Neal, she is twice your size, and possesses three times your strength; but for that very reason, Neal, marry her if you can. Large animals are placid; and heaven preserve those bachelors, whom I wish well, from a small wife: 'tis such who always wield the sceptre of domestic life, and rule their husbands with a rod of iron."

"Say no more, Mr. O'Connor," replied the tailor, "she's the very girl I'm in love wid, an' never fear, but I'll overcome her heart if it can be done by man. Now, step over the way to my house, an' we'll have a sup on the head of it. Who's that calling?"

"Ah! Neal, I know the tones—there's a shrillness in them not to be mistaken. Farewell! I must depart; you have heard the proverb, 'those who are bound must obey.' Young Jack, I presume is squalling, and I must either nurse him, rock the cradle, or sing comic tunes for him, though heaven knows with what a disastrous

heart I often sing 'Begone dull care,' the 'Rakes of Newcastle,' or, 'Peas upon a trencher.' Neal, I say again, pause before you take this leap in the dark. Pause, Neal, I entreat you. Farewell!"

Neal, however, was gifted with the heart of an Irishman, and scorned caution as the characteristic of a coward; he had, as it appeared, abandoned all design of fighting, but the courage still adhered to him even in making love. He consequently conducted the siege of Biddy Neil's heart with a degree of skill and valour which would not have come amiss to Marshal Gerald at the siege of Antwerp. Locke or Dugald Stewart, indeed, had they been cognizant of the tailor's triumph, might have illustrated the principle on which he succeeded—as to ourselves, we can only conjecture it. Our own opinion is, that they were both animated with a congenial spirit. Biddy was the very pink of pugnacity, and could throw in a body blow, or plant a facer, with singular energy and science. Her prowess hitherto had, we confess, been displayed only within the limited range of domestic life; but should she ever find it necessary to exercise it upon a larger scale, there was no doubt whatsoever, in the opinion of her mother, brothers, and sisters, every one of whom she had successively subdued, that she must undoubtedly distinguish herself. There was certainly one difficulty which the tailor had *not* to encounter in the progress of his courtship; the field was his own; he had not a rival to dispute his claim.

Neither was there any opposition given by her friends; they were, on the contrary, all anxious for the match; and when the arrangements were concluded, Neal felt his hand squeezed by them in succession, with an expression more resembling condolence than joy. Neal, however, had been bred to tailoring, and not to metaphysics; he could cut out a coat very well, but we do not say that he could trace a principle—as what tailor, except Jeremy Taylor, could?

There was nothing particular in the wedding. Mr. O'Connor was asked by Neal to be present at it: but he shook his head, and told him that he had not courage to attend it, or inclination to witness any man's sorrows but his own. He met the wedding party by accident, and was heard to exclaim with a sigh, as they flaunted past him in gay exuberance of spirits—"Ah, poor Neal! he is going like one of her father's cattle to the shambles! Woe is me for having suggested matrimony to the tailor! He will not long be under the necessity of saying that he 'is blue-moulded for want of a beating.' The butcheress will fell him like a Kerry ox, and I may have his blood to answer for, and his discomfiture to feel for, in addition to my own miseries."

On the evening of the wedding-day, about the hour of ten o'clock, Neal—whose spirits were uncommonly exalted, for his heart luxuriated within him—danced with his bride's maid; after the dance he sat beside her, and got eloquent in praise of her beauty; and it is said too, that he

whispered to her, and chucked her chin with considerable gallantry. The *tête-à-tête* continued for some time without exciting particular attention, with one exception; but *that* exception was worth a whole chapter of general rules. Mrs. Malone rose up, then sat down again, and took off a glass of the native; she got up a second time—all the wife rushed upon her heart—she approached them, and in a fit of the most exquisite sensibility, knocked the bride's maid down, and gave the tailor a kick of affecting pathos upon the inexpressibles. The whole scene was a touching one on both sides. The tailor was sent on all-fours to the floor; but Mrs. Malone took him quietly up, put him under her arm, as one would a lap dog, and with stately step marched away to the connubial apartment, in which everything remained very quiet for the rest of the night.

The next morning Mr. O'Connor presented himself to congratulate the tailor on his happiness. Neal, as his friend shook hands with him, gave the schoolmaster's fingers a slight squeeze, such as a man gives who would gently intreat your sympathy. The schoolmaster looked at him, and thought he shook his head. Of this, however, he could not be certain; for, as he shook his own during the moment of observation, he concluded that it might be a mere mistake of the eye, or, perhaps, the result of a mind predisposed to be credulous on the subject of shaking heads.

We wish it were in our power to draw a veil, or curtain, or blind of some description, over the

Mrs. Malone Taking Neal to Bed
Etching from an Original Drawing by Pais

Mrs. Malone Taking Neal to Bed

Etching from an Original Drawing by Phiz

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remnant of the tailor's narrative that is to follow; but as it is the duty of every faithful historian to give the secret causes of appearances which the world in general do not understand, so we think it but honest to go on, impartially and faithfully, without shrinking from the responsibility that is frequently annexed to truth.

For the first three days after matrimony, Neal felt like a man who had been translated to a new and more lively state of existence. He had expected, and flattered himself, that, the moment this event should take place, he would once more resume his heroism, and experience the pleasure of a drubbing. This determination he kept a profound secret—nor was it known until a future period, when he disclosed it to Mr. O'Connor. He intended, therefore, that marriage should be nothing more than a mere parenthesis in his life —a kind of asterisk, pointing, in a note at the bottom, to this single exception in his general conduct—a *nota bene* to the spirit of a martial man, intimating that he had been peaceful only for a while. In truth, he was, during the influence of love over him, and up to the very day of his marriage, secretly as blue-moulded as ever for want of a beating. The heroic *penchant* lay snugly latent in his heart, unchecked and unmodified. He flattered himself that he was achieving a capital imposition upon the world at large—that he was actually hoaxing mankind in general—and that such an excellent piece of knavish tranquillity had never been perpetrated before his time.

On the first week after his marriage, there chanced to be a fair in the next market-town. Neal, after breakfast, brought forward a bunch of *shillelahs,* in order to select the best; the wife inquired the purpose of the selection, and Neal declared that he was resolved to have a fight that day, if it were to be had, he said, for "love or money." "The thruth is," he exclaimed, strutting with fortitude about the house, "the thruth is, that I've *done* the whole of yez—*I'm as blue-mowlded as ever for want of a batin'.*"

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I *will* go," said Neal, with vehemence; "I'll go if the whole parish was to go to prevint me."

In about another half-hour Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the fair!

Much ingenious speculation might be indulged in, upon this abrupt termination to the tailor's most formidable resolution; but, for our own part, we will prefer going on with the narrative, leaving the reader at liberty to solve the mystery as he pleases. In the mean time, we say this much—let those who cannot make it out, carry it to their tailor; it is a tailor's mystery, and no one has so good a right to understand it—except perhaps, a tailor's wife.

At the period of his matrimony, Neal had become as plump and as stout as he ever was known to be in his plumpest and stoutest days. He and the schoolmaster had been very intimate about this time; but we know not how it happened that soon afterwards he felt a modest bridelike re-

luctance in meeting with that afflicted gentleman. As the eve of his union approached, he was in the habit, during the schoolmaster's visits to his workshop, of alluding, in rather a sarcastic tone, considering the unthriving appearance of his friend, to the increasing lustiness of his person. Nay, he has often leaped up from his lap-board, and, in the strong spirit of exultation, thrust out his leg in attestation of his assertion, slapping it, moreover, with a loud laugh of triumph, that sounded like a knell to the happiness of his emaciated acquaintance. The schoolmaster's philosophy, however, unlike his flesh, never departed from him; his usual observation was, "Neal, we are both receding from the same point; you increase in flesh, whilst I, heaven help me, am fast diminishing."

The tailor received these remarks with very boisterous mirth, whilst Mr. O'Connor simply shook his head, and looked sadly upon his limbs, now shrouded in a superfluity of garments, somewhat resembling a slender thread of water in a shallow summer stream, nearly wasted away, and surrounded by an unproportionate extent of channel.

The fourth month after the marriage arrived. Neal, one day, near its close, began to dress himself in his best apparel. Even then, when buttoning his waistcoat, he shook his head after the manner of Mr. O'Connor, and made observations upon the great extent to which it overfolded him.

Well, thought he, with a sigh—this waistcoat

certainly *did* fit me to a T; but it's wondherful to think how—cloth stretches!

"Neal," said the wife, on perceiving him drest, "where are you bound for?"

"Faith, *for life,*" replied Neal, with a mitigated swagger; "and I'd as soon, if it had been the will of Provid——"

He paused.

"Where are you going?" asked the wife, a second time.

"Why," he answered, "only to the dance at Jemmy Connolly's; I'll be back early."

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I'll go," said Neal, "if the whole counthry was to prevent me. Thunder an' lightnin', woman, who am I?" he exclaimed, in a loud but rather infirm voice; "amn't I Neal Malone, that never met a *man* who'd fight him! Neal Malone, that was never beat by *man!* Why, tare-an-ounze, woman! Whoo! I'll get enraged some time, an' play the divil? Who's afeard, I say?"

"*Don't go,*" added the wife, a third time, giving Neal a significant look in the face.

In about another half-hour, Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the dance!

Neal now turned himself, like many a sage in similar circumstances, to philosophy; that is to say—he began to shake his head upon principle, after the manner of the schoolmaster. He would, indeed, have preferred the bottle upon principle; but there was no getting at the bottle,

except through the wife; and it so happened that by the time it reached him, there was little consolation left in it. Neal bore all in silence; for silence, his friend had often told him, was a proof of wisdom.

Soon after this, Neal, one evening, met Mr. O'Connor by chance upon a plank which crossed a river. This plank was only a foot in breadth, so that no two individuals could pass each other upon it. We cannot find words in which to express the dismay of both, on finding that they absolutely glided past one another without collision.

Both paused, and surveyed each other solemnly; but the astonishment was all on the side of Mr. O'Connor.

"Neal," said the schoolmaster, "by all the household gods, I conjure you to speak, that I may be assured you live!"

The ghost of a blush crossed the church-yard visage of the tailor.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "why the devil did you tempt me to marry a wife."

"Neal," said his friend, "answer me in the most solemn manner possible—throw into your countenance all the gravity you can assume; speak as if you were under the hands of the hangman, with the rope about your neck, for the question is, indeed, a trying one which I am about to put. Are you still 'blue-moulded for want of beating?'"

The tailor collected himself to make a reply; he put one leg out—the very leg which he used

to show in triumph to his friend; but, alas, how dwindled! He opened his waistcoat, and lapped it round him, until he looked like a weasel on its hind legs. He then raised himself up on his tip-toes, and, in an awful whisper, replied, "No!!! the devil a bit I'm *blue-mowlded* for want of a batin'."

The schoolmaster shook his head in his own miserable manner; but, alas! he soon perceived that the tailor was as great an adept at shaking the head as himself. Nay, he saw that there was a calamitous refinement—a delicacy of shake in the tailor's vibrations, which gave to his own nod a very commonplace character.

The next day the tailor took in his clothes; and from time to time continued to adjust them to the dimensions of his shrinking person. The schoolmaster and he, whenever they could steal a moment, met and sympathised together. Mr. O'Connor, however, bore up somewhat better than Neal. The latter was subdued in heart and in spirit; thoroughly, completely, and intensely vanquished. His features became sharpened by misery, for a termagant wife is the whetstone on which all the calamities of a hen-pecked husband are painted by the devil. He no longer strutted as he was wont to do; he no longer carried a cudgel as if he wished to wage a universal battle with mankind. He was now a married man.—Sneakingly, and with a cowardly crawl did he creep along as if every step brought him nearer to the gallows. The schoolmaster's march of misery was far slower than Neal's: the latter dis-

tanced him. Before three years passed, he had shrunk up so much, that he could not walk abroad of a windy day without carrying weights in his pockets to keep him firm on the earth, which he once trod with the step of a giant. He again sought the schoolmaster, with whom indeed he associated as much as possible. Here he felt certain of receiving sympathy; nor was he disappointed. That worthy, but miserable man, and Neal, often retired beyond the hearing of their respective wives, and supported each other by every argument in their power. Often have they been heard, in the dusk of evening, singing behind a remote hedge that melancholy ditty, "Let us *both* be unhappy together;" which rose upon the twilight breeze with a cautious quaver of sorrow truly heart-rending and lugubrious.

"Neal," said Mr. O'Connor, on one of those occasions, "here is a book which I recommend to your perusal; it is called 'The Afflicted Man's Companion;' try, if you cannot glean some consolation out of it."

"Faith," said Neal, "I'm for ever oblaged to you, but I don't want it. I've had 'The Afflicted Man's Companion' too long, and divil an atom of consolation I can get out of it. I have *one* o' them I tell you; but, be me sowl, I'll not undhertake *a pair* o' them. The very name's enough for me." They then separated.

The tailor's *vis vitæ* must have been powerful, or he would have died. In two years more his friends could not distinguish him from his own shadow; a circumstance which was of great in-

convenience to him. Several grasped at the hand of the shadow instead of his; and one man was near paying it five and sixpence for making a pair of small-clothes. Neal, it is true, undeceived him with some trouble; but candidly admitted that he was not able to carry home the money. It was difficult, indeed, for the poor tailor to bear what he felt; it is true he bore it as long as he could: but at length he became suicidal, and often had thoughts of "making his own *quietus* with his bare bodkin." After many deliberations and afflictions, he ultimately made the attempt; but, alas! he found that the blood of the Malones refused to flow upon so ignominious an occasion. So *he* solved the phenomenon; although the truth was, that his blood was not "i' the vein" for it; none was to be had. What then was to be done? He resolved to get rid of life by some process; and the next that occurred to him was hanging. In a solemn spirit he prepared a selvage, and suspended himself from the rafter of his workshop; but here another disappointment awaited him—he would not hang. Such was his want of gravity, that his own weight proved insufficient to occasion his death by mere suspension. His third attempt was at drowning, but he was too light to sink; all the elements—all his own energies joined themselves, he thought, in a wicked conspiracy to save his life. Having thus tried every avenue to destruction and failed in all, he felt like a man doomed to live for ever. Henceforward he shrunk and shrivelled by slow degrees, until in

the course of time he became so attenuated, that the grossness of human vision could no longer reach him.

This, however, could not last always. Though still alive, he was to all intents and purposes imperceptible. He could now only be heard; he was reduced to a mere essence—the very echo of human existence, *vox et præterea nihil.* It is true the schoolmaster asserted that he occasionally caught passing glimpses of him; but that was because he had been himself nearly spiritualised by affliction, and his visual ray purged in the furnace of domestic tribulation. By and by Neal's voice lessened, got fainter and more indistinct, until at length nothing but a doubtful murmur could be heard, which ultimately could scarcely be distinguished from a ringing in the ears.

Such was the awful and mysterious fate of the tailor, who, as a hero, could not of course die; he merely dissolved like an icicle, wasted into immateriality, and finally melted away beyond the perception of mortal sense. Mr. O'Connor is still living, and once more in the fulness of perfect health and strength. His wife, however, we may as well hint, has been dead more than two years.

NOTES

[1] A child.

[2] Eternal perdition on you, you red rogue.

[3] Breeches made of sheep's skin, so called from the noise they make in walking or running.

[4] When a country girl is said to have a large fortune, the peasantry, when speaking of her in reference to matrimony, say she's a "Great Match."

[5] A familiar term for "Transportation."

[6] My blessing be with you, you rogue!

[7] The cross be about us!

[8] This to you, you rogue.

[9] Tipsy.

[10] Hold your tongue.

[11] This is another absurd opinion peculiar to the Irish, and certainly one of the most pernicious that prevail among them. Indeed, I believe there is no country in which so many absurd maxims exist.

[12] Intimating theft.

[13] Compare.

[14] This was actually said of the person alluded to—a celebrated usurer and agent to two or three estates, who was a little deaf, and had his ears occasionally stuffed with black wool.

[15] Toil—labour.

[16] Dripping—very wet.

[17] Determined on.

[18] Soft, innocent person.

[19] The Protestant clergy.

[20] There is a superstitious belief in some parts of Ireland, that priest's money is unlucky; "because," say the people, "it is the price of sin"—alluding to absolution.

[21] Say I.

[22] Such collections were generally made in hats—the usual name for an Irish peasant's hat being *caubeen*.

[23] This sound, which expresses wonder, is produced by striking the tip of the tongue against the palate.

[24] Lumbago, we presume.

[25] In the north of Ireland the word blackmouth means a Presbyterian.

[26] In the other world.

[27] I know not whether this may be considered worthy of a note or not. I have myself frequently seen and tasted what is appropriately termed by the peasantry "Stone Marrow." It is found in the heart of a kind of soft granite, or perhaps I should rather say freestone. The country people use it medicinally, but I cannot remember what particular disease it is said to cure. It is a soft saponaceous substance, not unpleasant to the taste, of a bluish colour, and melts in the mouth, like the fat of cold meat, leaving the palate greasy. How far an investigation into its nature and properties might be useful to the geologist or physician, it is not for me to conjecture. As the fact appeared to be a curious one, and necessary, moreover, to illustrate the expression used in the text, I thought it not amiss to mention it. It may be a *bonne bouche* for the geologists.

[28] This nickname was first bestowed upon them by the continental priests, who generally ridiculed them for their vulgarity. They were, for the most part, simple but worthy men.

[29] The following quotation taken from a sketch called "The Irish Midwife," by the author, gives an illustration of this passage:—"The first, meaning pain in the head, she cures by a very formal and serious process called 'measuring the head.' This is done by a ribbon, which she puts round the cranium, repeating during the admeasurement a certain prayer or charm from which the operation is to derive its whole efficacy. The measuring is performed twice—in the first instance, to show that its sutures are separated by disease, or, to speak more plainly, that the bones of the head are absolutely opened, and that as a natural consequence the head must be much larger than when the patient is in a state of health. The circumference of the first admeasurement is marked upon a ribbon, after which she repeats the charm that is to remove the headache, and measures the cranium again, in order to show, by a comparison of the two ribbons, that the sutures have been closed, the charm successful, and the headache immediately removed. It is impossible to say how the discrepancy in the measurement is brought about; but be that as it may, the writer of this has frequently seen the operation performed in such a way as to defy the most scrutinising eye to detect any appearance of imposture, and he is convinced that in the majority

of cases there is not the slightest imposture intended. The operator is in truth a dupe to a strong and delusive enthusiasm."

[30] My poor child.

[31] Owns.

[32] The pretty girl milking her cow.

[33] This, almost in every instance, is the dress of a wealthy Irish farmer.

[34] As much as you please.

[35] Considerate.

[36] Do you understand this?

[37] I understand—I understand.

[38] He is evidently drawing the long-bow here: this anecdote has been told before.

[39] Money.

[40] A term implying illegitimacy.

[41] Little boys.

[42] Outwit.

[43] Punish.

[44] The pretty *young* boy. *Boy* in Ireland does not always imply youth.

[45] A soft booby easily hoaxed.

[46] Different kinds of potatoes.

[47] That is—to get over—to survive.

[48] The peasantry always address a Roman Catholic Bishop as "My Lord."

[49] This is the fact. The individual here alluded to, frequently kept back receipts when receiving rents, under pretence of hurry, and afterwards compelled the tenants to pay the same gale twice!

[50] The devil;—a familiar name for him when mentioned in connexion with a villain.

[51] A half-tumbler of punch.

[52] This dialect is local.

[53] There are hundreds of thousands—yes, millions—of the poorer classes in Ireland, who have never tasted mutton!

[54] This tale has been written nearly twelve years, but the author deeply regrets that the Irish landlords have disentitled themselves to the favourable notice taken of them in the text.

[55] My light.

[56] Such is the superstition; and, as I can tell, faithfully is it believed.

[57] Meldhre—whatever quantity of grain is brought to the mill to be ground on one occasion.

[58] That is at a loss; or more properly speaking, taken short, which it means.

[59] Meerin—a march ditch, a boundary.

[60] In "hand-weeding," old gloves are used to prevent the hands from being injured by the thistles.

[61] Tub.

[62] Brieuliagh—squabble.

[63] By my soul and body.

[64] Girl of my heart.

[65] Light of my eyes and of my heart.

[66] The welcome.

[67] My poor children.

[68] God is sometimes thus termed in Ireland. By "Man" here is meant person or being. He is also called the "Man above"; although this must have been intended for, and often is applied to, Christ only.

[69] My sugar.

[70] Untranslateable—but means a womanly man—a poor effeminate creature.

[71] When an Irish peasant sets out on a journey, or to transact business in fair or market, he will not, if possible, turn back. It is considered unlucky; as it is also to be crossed by a hare, or met by a red-haired woman.

[72] Light of my heart.

[73] It is unnecessary to add, that years have passed since this date was given.

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